

TSA MODERNIZATION: IMPROVEMENTS TO AVIATION SECURITY

HEARING

BEFORE THE

SUBCOMMITTEE ON AVIATION OPERATIONS,
SAFETY, AND SECURITY

OF THE

COMMITTEE ON COMMERCE,
SCIENCE, AND TRANSPORTATION
UNITED STATES SENATE

ONE HUNDRED FIFTEENTH CONGRESS

FIRST SESSION

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SENATE COMMITTEE ON COMMERCE, SCIENCE, AND TRANSPORTATION

ONE HUNDRED FIFTEENTH CONGRESS

FIRST SESSION

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CONTENTS

	Page
Hearing held on September 28, 2017	1
Statement of Senator Blunt	1
Statement of Senator Cantwell	2
Statement of Senator Inhofe	18
Letter dated November 8, 2017 to Hon. James M. Inhofe from Michael	
R. White, Vice President, Government and Industry Relations, Cargo	
Network Services Corp	20
Statement of Senator Klobuchar	21
Statement of Senator Hassan	22
Statement of Senator Booker	26
Statement of Senator Markey	28
Statement of Senator Duckworth	31
Statement of Senator Schatz	33
Statement of Senator Thune	35
Statement of Senator Blumenthal	37

WITNESSES

Brian C. Weiler, A.A.E., Director of Aviation, Springfield-Branson National	
Airport	3
Prepared statement	4
Stephen A. Alterman, President, Cargo Airline Association; and Chairman,	
Aviation Security Advisory Committee, TSA	7
Prepared statement	8
Sissy Pressnell, Vice Chairman, Security Manufacturers Coalition	10
Prepared statement	11
Michael White, Vice President, Government and Industry Relations, Cargo	
Networks Services Corporation, International Air Transport Association	13
Prepared statement	15

APPENDIX

Response to written questions submitted by Hon. Gary Peters to:	
Brian Weiler	39
Response to written questions submitted to Stephen Alterman by:	
Hon. Gary Peters	39
Hon. Tammy Duckworth	40
Response to written questions submitted by Hon. Gary Peters to:	
Sissy Pressnell	40
Michael White	41

TSA MODERNIZATION: IMPROVEMENTS TO AVIATION SECURITY

THURSDAY, SEPTEMBER 28, 2017

U.S. SENATE,
SUBCOMMITTEE ON AVIATION OPERATIONS, SAFETY, AND
SECURITY,
COMMITTEE ON COMMERCE, SCIENCE, AND TRANSPORTATION,
Washington, DC.

The Subcommittee met, pursuant to notice, at 10:03 a.m. in room SR-253, Russell Senate Office Building, Hon. Roy Blunt, Chairman of the Subcommittee, presiding.

Present: Senators Blunt [presiding], Thune, Fischer, Sullivan, Inhofe, Capito, Gardner, Young, Cantwell, Klobuchar, Blumenthal, Schatz, Markey, Booker, Baldwin, Duckworth, and Hassan.

OPENING STATEMENT OF HON. ROY BLUNT, U.S. SENATOR FROM MISSOURI

Senator BLUNT. Senator Inhofe has pointed out that we have a vote at 10:30, so he's right, and we will start, and we'll work our way through that. I think it's just one vote, and if we do that, we'll do that in a way that we don't disrupt the hearing.

So let's call the hearing to order. We certainly had an earlier hearing in February of this year, where we had a number of the stakeholders come in and talk about what needed to happen at TSA. I'll say before we get well started with this, when I talk to anybody about air travel, whether they're running an airline or running the TSA agency or running an airport, I usually say there are two items that every member of the Senate thinks they're an expert on. One is politics, and two is air travel, and we do this about as much as anybody, so you'll have to kind of acknowledge our predisposition there to think we know more than we very well may know about the challenges you face.

But, certainly, the TSA obligation, the TSA challenges are significant. Everyone knows that the airports, the airlines, the transportation that's involved in tourism as well as the daily business of the country—critically important on what happens at airports and how we do that. The TSA challenge is obviously formidable. In 2016, TSA officers screened 738 million passengers, more than 2 million a day. In addition, TSA screened 466 million checked bags and over 24 million airport employees. So to get that right and to get it right every time is a huge challenge, and I think there is a lot of appreciation for just how hard this job is.

In our February hearing and as a result of the events of the baggage claim area at Fort Lauderdale Airport that had happened just

before that and the bombing at the public terminal in Brussels, Belgium, we have become well aware of the various security challenges at airports themselves in addition to getting people on and off airplanes in a safe way.

We know that we need to speed up technology evaluation and deployment of the best technology. We need to improve communication with the traveling public on wait times; identify how to leverage the PreCheck program; not be afraid to get creative and test new ways of doing things, such as one of the things we're going to talk about today, the idea of automating the exit line and impacting in a positive way the bottom line.

I'm pleased that Chairman Thune, myself, Ranking Member Nelson, and Senator Cantwell have a bill that we are looking at today. We're pleased to have the witnesses that I'll introduce in a moment with us here today, and I'd like to turn to Senator Cantwell for her comments.

**STATEMENT OF HON. MARIA CANTWELL,
U.S. SENATOR FROM WASHINGTON**

Senator CANTWELL. Thank you, Mr. Chairman. Thank you for having this important hearing about improving security in the aviation system. I'd like to thank our distinguished panelists as well. They deal with aviation security on a daily basis, and I look forward to the opportunity to hear from them about those issues.

I was also glad for the opportunity to discuss the TSA Modernization bill, which was just introduced, as the Chairman of the Subcommittee just said, by Chairman Thune, Ranking Member Nelson, and Senator Blunt and myself. The bill lays out what I believe is a strong framework for TSA to continue modernization and technology procedures to improve security and to keep the traveling public moving. I look forward to working with our colleagues on that.

In my home state, Sea-Tac Airport has been one of the fastest—wait a minute—the fastest growing large airport in the country for three consecutive years. So I can guarantee you this is a very daily issue for us. I want to thank then Administrator Neffenger for paying close attention to this, and I hope that Administrator Pekoske will also make improvements.

The bill that we introduced yesterday gives them the opportunity as an agency to develop testing and deployment of new technologies to improve security and efficiency for our traveling public. The airports and airlines deserve credit for their security work that they often do at their own expense. But we need to keep making improvements as we move forward. Our bill would give airports more flexibility to adapt to their own needs. The TSA Modernization Act would give airports the ability to train and deploy canine teams, some of the most effective tools that we have in making sure that our airports work in a secure and safe and efficient manner.

Under the new language, large airports that do not have their full complement of TSA passenger canine screenings would be able to train dogs through improved third-party certification programs working with TSA. While the flexibility is a vital tool for fast growing airports like Sea-Tac, it is also important to note that we are

giving airports the ability to increase TSA resources and to help make sure that we are making improvements to the team.

So I look forward to hearing from our witnesses today about these vital issues, and I thank the Chairman for this important hearing about technology and security.

Senator BLUNT. Thank you, Senator Cantwell.

We have our panelists with us today: Brian Weiler is the Director of Aviation at my hometown airport, the Springfield-Branson National Airport; Steve Alterman, the President of Cargo Airlines Association, Chairman of the Aviation Security Advisory Committee, and Mr. Alterman was with us in February, and we're glad that you were able to come back today; Sissy Pressnell, the Vice President of Strategic Business Development and Stakeholder Relations, Smith Detention, and Vice Chairman of the Security Manufacturers Coalition; and Mr. Michael White, Vice President, Government and Industry Relations, Cargo Network Services Corporation, International Air Transportation Association.

So, Mr. Weiler, if you'll start, and we'll limit each of you to 5 minutes, and you don't have to take all that time if you don't want, and then we'll come to questions.

STATEMENT OF BRIAN C. WEILER, A.A.E., DIRECTOR OF AVIATION, SPRINGFIELD-BRANSON NATIONAL AIRPORT

Mr. WEILER. Thank you. Good morning, Chairman Blunt, Ranking Member Cantwell, and members of the Subcommittee. Thank you for the opportunity to discuss security modernization efforts at the Springfield-Branson National Airport where I serve as Director.

My airport is the third largest in the state of Missouri, serving a million passengers with 30 daily flights by four airlines. We also house a military base, air cargo operation, college flight training program, airline maintenance base, and Customs port of entry. The airport's 10-gate terminal was built in 2009, and the TSA security checkpoint configuration is two standard lanes with AIT equipment and one PreCheck lane.

The City of Springfield owns and operates the airport as an enterprise fund, which means we receive no local tax support, and all revenue generated needed to run the airport must be from user fees and rents. We focus on maximizing non-aeronautical revenue to keep our airline fees low. Airline passengers have increased more than 30 percent in five years at my airport by adding routes, frequency, and using larger aircraft. While this growth is good, it has, though, put a strain on our infrastructure, personnel, and financial resources.

FAA grants have become increasingly hard to get, and the Federal cap on local PFCs at \$4.50 has not been increased in 17 years. We recently had to borrow \$2 million to purchase specialized snow equipment to meet new FAA requirements, and we are making emergency pavement repairs to a primary taxiway that we were unable to get an FAA grant to fix. It is a constant challenge to maintain development of the airport to meet the growing public needs but with very limited resources.

Security is a shared responsibility, and it is absolutely imperative that TSA, airport operators, and our industry partners collaborate, communicate, and remain focused on the critical roles that

each of us play. On exit lane staffing, Congress has set in law that this is a TSA responsibility, and we appreciate that the bill continues funding to meet this obligation. My terminal has one exit lane that is staffed 14 hours a day by TSA when the checkpoint is open and then 6 hours by the airport until the last arrival.

We have wanted to automate the exit lane for years, really to save money for both TSA and us, but the \$300,000 cost was outside of our reach. The bill includes a new pilot program to implement and evaluate automated exit lane technology at small and non-hub airports. We see this win-win approach as a meaningful step forward and are pleased with the proposed robust Federal cost-share to make it attainable for smaller airports.

My airport has its own police department with 10 officers. We are one of 300 airports that utilize the LEO reimbursement program, but I can testify that the current reimbursement rate only defrays a small portion of the actual cost to meet security requirements. We have seen a 28 percent reduction in LEO reimbursements since 2011, which currently covers 60 percent of the cost, and right now, it only covers 12 percent of our police personnel budget.

We do appreciate the recognition and the importance of this program and the provisions to increase funding, the number of awards, and the funding per award. The commitment to enhance Federal support is very important for airports.

The Springfield Airport has also seen a 25 percent increase in our expedited screen rate for passengers since PreCheck was first implemented. However, I continue to hear complaints from my customers about a cumbersome enrollment process and applicants waiting several months to get an appointment interview with an authorized enrollment provider. We appreciate your focus on enhancing enrollment and new provisions aimed at increasing PreCheck participation.

In our view, TSA should publish its enrollment standards and any private sector entity meeting IT standards be allowed to submit applicant data for vetting by the TSA. This would ensure new and easier means for enrolling potential participants, including kiosks at airports and mobile device platforms.

In conclusion, I want to again express my appreciation for the opportunity to testify. I commend Senator Blunt and subcommittee members for your work to provide airports and TSA with additional tools to meet threats that continue to emerge. As you move forward in the face of continued Federal budget constraints, I urge you to recognize that we cannot neglect or cut back on the TSA personnel or other resources needed to maintain effective and efficient security screening at airports, large or small, nor should the cost of this Federal security burden be shifted to local airports with limited budgets.

I look forward to answering any questions.

[The prepared statement of Mr. Weiler follows:]

PREPARED STATEMENT OF BRIAN C. WEILER, A.A.E., DIRECTOR OF AVIATION,
SPRINGFIELD-BRANSON NATIONAL AIRPORT

Chairman Blunt, Ranking Member Cantwell, and members of the subcommittee, thank you for the opportunity to discuss security modernization efforts at the

Springfield-Branson National Airport, where I serve as airport director. I am also the immediate Past President of the Missouri Airport Managers Association and have been for over 20 years an accredited member of the American Association of Airport Executives, which represents thousands of men and women across the country who manage and operate our Nation's airports.

My airport is the third largest in the State of Missouri and classified by the Federal Aviation Administration as a small hub airport based on airline passenger volume. We will serve about a million passengers in 2017 with four airlines (American, Delta, United, and Allegiant) and nonstop service to 13 destinations, including an average 30 daily flights to six major airline hubs. The airport also houses a Missouri Air National Guard helicopter repair base, UPS/FedEx air cargo operations, college flight training program, airline maintenance base, and is a U.S. Customs and Border Protection Port of Entry for general aviation and corporate aircraft.

The airport's 10-gate, 275,000 square foot airline terminal was built in 2009. The current three-lane TSA security checkpoint configuration is two standard lanes with Advanced Imaging Technology (AIT) equipment and one PreCheck lane with a metal detector. Baggage operations are supported with two Explosive Detection System (EDS) CT80 equipment. TSA management for the airport also oversees security operations at six non-hub commercial service airports in our area with one Assistant Federal Security Director (AFSD) and three Transportation Security Managers (TSMs). Recent security enhancements include installation of new AIT equipment in 2014 and PreCheck in 2016. We are scheduled to get a dedicated Known Crew-member Lane in November of this year.

The City of Springfield owns and operates the airport as a municipal enterprise fund department, which means it is run like a business and receives no local tax support. All revenue needed to cover operating costs is generated from user fees, rents, and charges. We focus on generating as much non-aeronautical revenue as possible to keep airline fees low and maintain an environment supporting airline service growth, which is critical to our regional economy. Some examples include operating the 23-county Foreign Trade Zone and redevelopment of our former airline terminal into office space for over 1,000 employees. The airport houses some 40 businesses, employees over 2,000 people, and generates an estimated \$500 million annually in economic impact for Southwest Missouri.

Airline passengers handled by the airport have grown more than 30 percent over the last five years, which is more than twice the national average annual growth rate of 2–3 percent. Working with our airline partners, we have added multiple routes, increased frequency, and are transitioning to larger aircraft from the 50-seat regional jets that were primarily serving our markets. While this growth is good and reflects a strong local economy, it has put a strain on airport infrastructure, personnel, and financial resources.

FAA Airport Improvement Program grants have become increasingly hard to get, and the Federal cap on local Passenger Facility Charges (PFCs) of \$4.50 has not been increased in 17 years to even keep pace with inflation. Our airport recently had to borrow \$2 million from a local bank to replace three pieces of 35 year old specialized snow removal equipment needed to comply with new FAA runway condition reporting requirements. We are also in the process of making emergency pavement repairs to a primary taxiway that we are unable to get an FAA grant to rebuild. It is a constant challenge to maintain and develop the airport to meet growing public needs within very limited resources, which is why we continue to ask Congress for more local flexibility with the PFC.

I am pleased to say that airport management enjoys an excellent working relationship with and has the highest regard for TSA managers and personnel who work at the Springfield-Branson National Airport. This was also confirmed with the public in a recent passenger satisfaction study that scored efficient/friendly TSA personnel and clean restrooms as our two highest attributes. We all take our jobs seriously and partner together daily to maintain a high level of security for the traveling public in a customer service environment.

Security is a shared responsibility at my airport and every other commercial service airport across the country. It is absolutely imperative that TSA, airport operators, and our industry partners collaborate, communicate, and remain keenly focused on the critical roles that each of us play in ensuring that airport facilities are as safe, secure, and efficient as possible to protect and serve the traveling public.

This background leads to current efforts underway to improve aviation security and my input on four areas within the proposed legislation that the subcommittee may soon consider.

Exit Lane Technology and Staffing: Congress has established in law that exit lane staffing is clearly a TSA responsibility. My terminal has a fairly simple design with one exit lane, which is staffed by TSA about 14 hours a day (4:00am–6:00pm) when

the checkpoint is open; then by airport staff for an additional six hours after the last departure at about 6:00pm until the last arrival around midnight. The airport has wanted to automate our exit lane for years, but with no Federal cost-share program currently available, the approximate \$300,000 cost is outside of our financial ability. Since TSA and the airport staff our exit lane during different times of the day, both would benefit and save money by automating our exit lane.

The draft legislation includes a pilot program to implement and evaluate automated exit lane technology at small and non-hub airports under a new Federal cost-share program. While not for every airport, such a program would give airports like Springfield the ability to work with TSA to automate our exit lane and save money/personnel resources for both agencies. We strongly support this win-win approach to resolving this issue, but ask that the program be implemented at an 85 percent federal/15 percent local cost-share so it is attainable for smaller airports that are budget constrained.

Law Enforcement Officer Reimbursement Grant Program: The Springfield airport has its own Airport Police Department with 10 sworn officers and a wide area of responsibility over 3,300 acres of property, including providing law enforcement support to the TSA security checkpoint. We are one of approximately 300 airports that utilize the LEO reimbursement grant program, but can testify the current reimbursement rate of \$20/hour only defrays a small portion of our costs to meet security requirements. We have experienced a 28 percent reduction in LEO reimbursement since 2011. Our current reimbursement of \$104,000 covers about 60 percent of the \$172,000 it costs to provide law enforcement support to the TSA checkpoint and is just 12 percent of our annual police personnel budget.

While we appreciate the inclusion of language continuing the LEO reimbursement program at the current funding level of \$45 million, the legislation also proposes to significantly broaden LEO responsibilities beyond those covered by existing security requirements. This includes increasing officer presence in public areas like baggage claim, ticket counters, and nearby roads. While these are certainly worthy goals, adding program responsibilities while keeping funding stagnant creates a significant unfunded mandate on airport operators. This would be difficult for small airports, especially those that utilize local law enforcement (County Sheriff or City Police) to meet these new requirements without hiring additional officers and incurring additional costs.

PreCheck: The Springfield airport has seen a 25 percent increase in our expedited screen rate of our passengers since PreCheck was first implemented at our airport in 2016. We see this as significant progress and support further expansion of the program. However, while TSA continues to slowly grow participation in PreCheck, I continue to hear complaints from my customers about a cumbersome enrollment process and applicants waiting several months to get an appointment interview with an authorized enrollment provider, which there is only one serving my regional area. Just last week, one of my staff checked and the first available appointment was almost three months out.

We suggest that TSA should publish its enrollment standards and that any private sector entity that meets information technology standards to connect into the Federal Government be allowed to submit applicant data for vetting and eligibility approved by TSA. This would ensure that there are numerous, creative, and easier means for enrolling potential participants, including using kiosks at airports, mobile devices, or other mobile enrollment platforms. Many airports would be willing to host PreCheck enrollment fairs and leverage existing resources, including the ability to facilitate fingerprint based background checks.

Security Checkpoint Wait Times: The average security checkpoint wait time at my airport is approximately 13 minutes, which many travelers find to be acceptable. However, as the airport continues to grow, we are seeing significantly longer wait times more often during peak season and peak times during the day. We support the requirement for TSA to make the length of airport wait times at each security checkpoint available to the public within one year. However, we suggest you consider adding more specificity to this requirement.

One area is in the definition of "wait time." TSA will say this time begins when the traveler enters the checkpoint line until they present their information to the travel document checker. TSA's definition does not include the time a passenger waits to place their personal items in bins to go into x-ray equipment or when they are screened for threat objects. The traveling public would likely define "wait time" as starting when they enter the line until they retrieve their screened items at the end of the checkpoint. Including a clear definition in the bill would help ensure there is no confusion as to what is being measured.

In conclusion, I want to again express my appreciation for the opportunity to testify today regarding aviation security, which is something that I and my fellow air-

port executives focus on and prioritize every day. I commend you, Senator Blunt and members of the subcommittee, for your work in trying to provide airports and TSA with additional tools to meet the challenges and threats that continue to emerge through your work on the legislation that is the subject of today's hearing.

As you move forward with this and other potential legislation, I urge you to recognize that we cannot neglect or cutback on the TSA personnel and other resources needed to maintain effective and efficient security screening of passengers/baggage at airports across the country, large or small. Nor should the costs of this Federal security burden be shifted to local airports with limited budgets. Air travel is projected to grow significantly in the years ahead and my airport colleagues and I welcome the opportunity to partner with TSA to enhance security throughout the airport environment.

I look forward to answering any questions you might have.

Senator BLUNT. Thank you, Mr. Weiler.
Mr. Alterman?

And if you're listening to the pounding here, welcome to the Russell Building. It has been this way—they've been working on our side of this hallway since January, and it's like that every day.

[Laughter.]

Senator BLUNT. And the air conditioning won't switch off.
Mr. Alterman.

**STATEMENT OF STEPHEN A. ALTERMAN, PRESIDENT,
CARGO AIRLINE ASSOCIATION; AND CHAIRMAN,
AVIATION SECURITY ADVISORY COMMITTEE, TSA**

Mr. ALTERMAN. Thank you, Mr. Chairman and members of the Subcommittee. Good morning. My name is Steve Alterman, and I'm President of the Cargo Airline Association. I also have the honor of currently serving as the Chair of the Aviation Security Advisory Committee at TSA.

When I testified before you in February, I mentioned several issues involving security policy that were having a significant impact on either the air cargo industry or on the work of ASAC. These issues included the use of third-party canines to screen air cargo, the need for a fixed five-year term for the TSA administrator, and the activity of ASAC in a number of areas. Much has happened since February, but the issues remain basically the same.

To put today's comments on these issues and your proposed legislation into context, I'd like to take a minute or two to describe the events that have happened since February. First of all and perhaps most significant, we have a new Administrator, and I can tell you that from the ASAC perspective, it's really nice to have a permanent Administrator there. I've had six bosses since 3 years ago taking over the Chair of ASAC, and it's nice to have an Administrator who I hope will be there for the long term.

The ASAC has continued its work schedule, including but not limited to the submission of its report on the Checkpoint of the Future to both TSA and Congress. We had new recommendations from our General Aviation Subcommittee on how to modify and enhance these security programs for the general aviation community, and we continue to monitor the implementation of recommendations relating to airport worker screening.

In addition, TSA is now moving forward to develop a program that would allow the third-party canine screening of air cargo. This program is not yet finalized, and the devil is always in the details,

but there has been significant movement. And, of course, the House of Representatives has passed its version of a DHS authorization bill. It's against this background that today's comments are submitted.

The proposed Senate TSA bill is a much needed piece of legislation. We urge that it be passed as soon as possible and that any differences between the House and Senate version be quickly resolved. We are particularly encouraged by the provision to give the TSA Administrator a fixed 5-year term of office. The instability caused by a rapid turnover at the top of the agency creates internal chaos and inhibits the ability to plan strategically for the challenges ahead. We also support wording in the proposed legislation that would make the 5-year term applicable to the current Administrator. I would think that's very important.

The bill also contains several separate provisions related to the activities of the Aviation Security Advisory Committee. On behalf of the members of ASAC, I want to thank you for your confidence in our work. We look forward to working with TSA to implement any provision in the proposed legislation that requires our assistance, and I do note there are four or five of those in the bill and we look forward to working with you on them.

From the air cargo perspective, perhaps the most significant provisions in the legislation relate to the use of third-party canines to screen air cargo. As noted on numerous previous occasions, the members of the all-cargo air carrier industry strongly support this program, and we thank the Committee for including a third-party canine provision in the proposed legislation.

We believe that the proposed Section 234 relating to the screening of air cargo by third-party canines contains the appropriate elements and succinctly lays out the process to be followed by TSA. While, as noted previously, TSA is in the process of moving in the direction of adopting the elements described, legislation is needed to ensure that the program is made permanent and not subject to future personnel changes within the agency.

And, finally, while I'm on the subject of air cargo security, we also strongly believe that TSA needs a more centralized focus on the air cargo supply chain. At the present time, TSA policies that focus on air cargo are not centralized, but rather are spread across the agency in a somewhat uncoordinated manner. This structure, or lack of structure, has often led to confusion and an uncoordinated application of security standards.

Thank you very much for the opportunity to testify, and I'd be happy to answer any questions.

[The prepared statement of Mr. Alterman follows:]

PREPARED STATEMENT OF STEPHEN A. ALTERMAN, PRESIDENT, CARGO AIRLINE ASSOCIATION; AND CHAIRMAN, AVIATION SECURITY ADVISORY COMMITTEE, TSA

Mr. Chairman and Members of the Subcommittee:

Good Morning. My name is Steve Alterman and I am the President of the Cargo Airline Association, the nationwide organization representing the interests of the all-cargo segment of the aviation community.¹ I also have the honor of currently

¹ Association members include direct air carriers ABX Air, Atlas Air, Federal Express Corporation, Kalitta Air and United Parcel Service Co., as well as Associate Members Amazon,

serving as the Chairman of the Aviation Security Advisory Committee (ASAC), the Federal committee established by Congress to advise the TSA Administrator on issues relating to all areas of aviation security. Thank you for inviting me to testify today.

When I testified before you in February, I mentioned several issues involving security policy that were having a significant impact on either the air cargo industry or on the work of ASAC. These issues included the use of third-party canines to screen air cargo; the need for a fixed five-year term for the TSA Administrator; and the activity of ASAC in a number of areas. Much has happened since February, but the basic issues remain the same.

To put today's comments on these issues and your proposed legislation into context, I would like to take a minute or two describing the significant events that have taken place between February and today:

- We have a new Administrator at TSA.
- The ASAC has continued its work schedule, including, but not limited to, the submission of its report on the Checkpoint of the Future to TSA and Congress, and the continued monitoring of the implementation of recommendations relating to airport worker screening.
- TSA is now moving forward to develop a program that would allow the third-party canine screening of air cargo. This program is not yet finalized, and the devil is always in the details, but there has been significant movement.
- The House of Representatives has passed its version of a DHS Authorization bill (H.R. 2825) that includes provisions similar to those in the Senate's proposed bill.

It is against this background that today's comments are submitted.

The proposed Senate TSA bill is a much-needed piece of legislation. We urge that it be passed as soon as possible and that any differences between the Senate and House versions be quickly resolved. We are particularly encouraged by the provision to give the TSA Administrator a fixed five-year term of office. The instability caused by a rapid turnover at the top of the Agency creates internal chaos and inhibits the ability to plan strategically for the challenges ahead. We also support wording in the proposed legislation that would make the five-year term applicable to the current Administrator without the need for a re-nomination and confirmation.

The bill also contains several separate provisions related to the activities of the Aviation Security Advisory Committee. On behalf of the members of ASAC, I want to thank you for your confidence in our work. We look forward to working with TSA to implement any provision in the proposed legislation that requires our assistance.

From the air cargo perspective, perhaps the most significant provisions in the legislation relate to the use of third-party canines to screen air cargo. As noted on numerous previous occasions, the members of the all-cargo air carrier industry strongly support this program and we thank the committee for including a third-party canine provision in the proposed legislation. We believe that the proposed section 234 relating to the screening of air cargo by third-party canines contains the appropriate elements and succinctly lays out the process to be followed by TSA. While, as noted previously, TSA is in the process of moving in the direction of adopting the elements described, legislation is needed to ensure that the program is made permanent and not subject to future personnel changes within the Agency.

And finally, while I am on the subject of air cargo security, we strongly believe that TSA needs a more centralized focus on the air cargo supply chain. At the present time, TSA policies that focus on air cargo are not centralized, but rather are spread across the Agency in a somewhat uncoordinated manner. This structure (or lack of structure) has often led to confusion and an uncoordinated application of security standards.

Thank you very much. I would be happy to answer any questions.

Senator BLUNT. Thank you.
Ms. Pressnell.

**STATEMENT OF SISSY PRESSNELL, VICE CHAIRMAN,
SECURITY MANUFACTURERS COALITION**

Ms. PRESSNELL. Good morning, Mr. Chairman. Chairman Blunt, Ranking Member Cantwell, and members of the Subcommittee, on behalf of the eight members of the Security Manufacturers Coalition, thank you for the opportunity to share collective industry priorities and key recommendations for modernizing and improving aviation security.

My name is Sissy Pressnell, and I'm the Vice Chair of the Security Manufacturers Coalition and also serve as the Chair of its Policy Committee. The SMC is the unified voice of leading security technology companies with manufacturing operations and offices in 10 states. The SMC generates 7,000 direct and 20,000 indirect jobs in everything from research and development to engineering and advanced product manufacturing. The companies have certified equipment deployed around the world.

The SMC recognizes that Congress must deal with substantial funding constraints and demands on its limited resources in an attempt to meet the needs of competing stakeholders. When considering aviation security, the lack of adequate funding and ever-changing priorities impedes long-term innovation at a time when threats against the system continue to evolve and present potential adverse effects on international travel and commerce.

TSA must embark on a requirements-driven, multi-year program that will immediately accelerate the development, testing, and deployment of next-generation technology as well as the initiation of system upgrades for all checkpoint and checked baggage technology with new software and detection algorithms. The SMC recommends ending the diversion of a portion of the passenger security fee that is now dedicated for deficit reduction to pay for checkpoint development and deployment of new technology enhancements. In the longer term, we support a multi-year approach that includes a checkpoint equipment capital fund similar to the checked baggage program to provide consistent availability of resources for technology acquisitions.

Industry needs more information and more direction from TSA to ensure that manufacturing as well as research and development investment plans are truly aligned with technology capability gaps and actual government acquisition needs. For technology manufacturers, as you know, the path to technology acquisition is a very long one. It takes an average of 3 to 5 years and sometimes up to 10 to deploy technology capabilities at the airports.

Congress must direct DHS and TSA to develop a plan to completely reconstitute the equipment test and evaluation process with a target goal of reducing the time-frame to no more than one year from the date of laboratory certification. This should start with a formal review of the test and evaluation process and the addition of resources dedicated to hiring additional testing experts to manage the transition to next-generation equipment. Additional efficiencies can also be realized by establishing a formal third-party test and evaluation process requiring TSA to actually accept the results at the conclusion of an authorized third-party test.

SMC members are global technology companies who manufacture security screening equipment that is tested and certified to meet

internationally recognized standards that are often more strict than those in the United States. Industry supports the recommendations contained in the recent Aviation Security Advisory Committee report titled “Improving Checkpoints at U.S. Airports.” The ASAC recognizes TSA’s efforts to coordinate the sharing of information with international partners to jointly define requirements and develop new security screening equipment that is capable of detecting explosives and other new threats to aviation.

The SMC supports the acceleration of efforts to develop common detection testing and certification protocols with international regulators and encourages TSA to accept the large amounts of data that are captured during testing and deployment at international airports to strengthen security screening both in the United States and abroad. This will help to improve security by creating common screening protocols and encouraging reciprocity between international partners and also to improve the passenger experience.

And, finally, the SMC strongly supports the work and the efforts of the Innovation Task Force. Since it was formally unveiled in 2016, the ITF has engaged with industry stakeholders to identify and demonstrate next-generation technology solutions to improve both security and operational efficiency at selected airports. In order to build upon recent successes and to clearly establish a process for developing a program of record for approved technologies, Congress should formally authorize and fund the work of the ITF.

Congress should direct the TSA to establish a framework and a formal requirements process that serves as a roadmap for industry engagement. At the same time, Congress should direct TSA to provide annual updates on the effectiveness of the ITF in improving the overall security equipment process.

The Security Manufacturers Coalition appreciates the opportunity to share our views and our recommendations with your committee today. These recommendations share broad and unanimous support within our industry, and many are already endorsed by the ASAC, which represents a broad spectrum of aviation stakeholders. The SMC appreciates the work of this committee and professional staff for its diligent and inclusive efforts in drafting the TSA Modernization Act. We strongly support this legislation, and we look forward to working with you in the future.

Thank you, sir.

[The prepared statement of Ms. Pressnell follows:]

PREPARED STATEMENT OF SISSY PRESSNELL, VICE CHAIRMAN,
SECURITY MANUFACTURERS COALITION

Chairman Blunt, Ranking Member Cantwell, and Members of the Subcommittee, on behalf of the eight members of the Security Manufacturers Coalition (SMC), thank you for the opportunity to share our collective industry priorities and key recommendations for modernizing and improving aviation security.

The SMC is the unified voice of leading security technology companies with manufacturing operations and offices in ten states. The SMC generates 7,000 direct and 20,000 indirect jobs in everything from research and development to engineering and advanced product manufacturing. The companies have certified equipment deployed around the world.

The Department of Homeland Security (DHS) and the Transportation Security Administration (TSA) have been diligently working to make long-term improvements to aviation security at the checkpoint and beyond. The SMC and its member companies share the government’s concern about new and evolving threats, and re-

main committed to delivering first-rate threat detection and screening equipment to improve security for the traveling public.

My testimony today will focus on shared industry priorities and recommendations for TSA modernization that will enable TSA to remain prepared and stay ahead of its adversaries to deter, detect, and disrupt any threat to aviation while also being able to meet the growing demands of air travelers.

Funding to meet current future needs

The SMC recognizes that Congress must deal with substantial funding constraints and demands on its limited resources in an attempt to meet the needs of competing stakeholders. When considering aviation security, the lack of adequate funding and ever-changing priorities impedes long-term innovation at a time when threats against the system continue to evolve and present potential adverse effects on international travel and commerce. To that end, TSA must embark on a focused, requirements-driven, multi-year program that will immediately accelerate the development, testing, and deployment of next generation technology as well as the initiation of system upgrades for all checkpoint and checked baggage technology with new software and detection algorithms. Making long-term technology investments takes planning and significant resources. In the short-term, the SMC recommends ending the diversion of a portion of the Passenger Security Fee that is now dedicated for deficit reduction to pay for checkpoint development and deployment of new technology enhancements. Longer term, we support a multi-year approach that includes a checkpoint equipment capital fund, similar to the checked baggage program, to provide consistent availability of resources for technology acquisitions.

Authorize and Fully Fund the Innovation Task Force

The SMC strongly supports the work and the efforts of the Innovation Task Force (ITF). Since it was formally unveiled in 2016, the ITF has engaged with industry stakeholders to identify and demonstrate next generation technology solutions to improve both security and operational efficiency at selected airports. In order to build upon recent successes and to clearly establish a process for developing a program of record for approved technologies, Congress should formally authorize and fund the work of the ITF. Congress should direct the TSA to establish a framework and a formal requirements process that serves as a roadmap for industry engagement and to further encourage industry collaboration and participation. At the same time, Congress should direct TSA to provide annual updates on the effectiveness of the ITF in improving the overall security equipment development and acquisitions process.

Enacting Acquisition Reform and Improving the Test & Evaluation Process

The passage of the Transportation Security Reform Act (TSARA—P.L. 113–245) was an important legislative achievement and a key milestone for security technology manufacturers. For the first time, TSA was required to develop a five-year technology acquisition plan and share its contents with industry. This document provides a valuable framework for industry resource planning. However, industry needs more information and more direction from TSA to ensure that future manufacturing as well as research and development investment plans are truly aligned with technology capability gaps and actual government acquisition needs.

For technology manufacturers, the path to technology acquisition is a long one. It takes an average of three to five years, and sometimes up to ten, for new technology capabilities to navigate the test and evaluation process before being deployed at airports. Congress must direct DHS and TSA to develop a plan to completely reconstitute the equipment test and evaluation process with a target goal of reducing the time-frame to no more than one year from the date of laboratory certification. This should start with a formal review of the test and evaluation process conducted to establish a new and more streamlined process. The SMC recommends additional resources be dedicated to hiring additional testing experts to manage the transition to the next generation of equipment. Additional efficiencies can also be realized by establishing a formal third party test and evaluation process, and requiring TSA to accept the results at the conclusion of an authorized third party test.

International Harmonization

SMC members are global technology companies who manufacture security screening equipment that is tested and certified to meet internationally-recognized standards that are often more strict than those in the United States. Industry supports the recommendations contained in the recent

Aviation Security Advisory Committee (ASAC) report titled, “Improving Checkpoints at U.S. Airports”. The ASAC recognizes TSA’s efforts to coordinate the sharing of information with international partners to jointly define requirements and de-

velop new security screening equipment that is capable of detecting explosives and other new threats to aviation. The SMC supports the acceleration of efforts to develop common detection testing and certification protocols with international regulators, and encourages TSA to accept the large amounts of data that are captured during testing and deployment at international airports to strengthen security screening both in the United States and abroad. This will help to improve security by creating common screening protocols and encouraging reciprocity between international partners to improve the passenger experience. It will also drive down the cost of next generation advanced technology by making it more affordable and available to everyone while increasing manufacturing certainty.

Closing

The Security Manufacturers Coalition appreciates the opportunity to share our views and recommendations with the Committee today. These recommendations share broad and unanimous support within our industry, and many were also endorsed by the ASAC, which represents a broad spectrum of aviation stakeholders. The SMC appreciates the work of this Committee and professional staff for its diligent and inclusive efforts in drafting the TSA Modernization Act. The SMC strongly supports this legislation and looks forward to working with you and the TSA to improve the security of the traveling public.

Senator BLUNT. Thank you, Ms. Pressnell.
Mr. White.

STATEMENT OF MICHAEL WHITE, VICE PRESIDENT, GOVERNMENT AND INDUSTRY RELATIONS, CARGO NETWORKS SERVICES CORPORATION, INTERNATIONAL AIR TRANSPORT ASSOCIATION

Mr. WHITE. Chairman Blunt, Ranking Member Cantwell, and members of the Subcommittee, thank you for inviting me to participate in today's hearing on modernizing the TSA. My name is Michael White. I'm the Vice President of Government and Industry Relations for Cargo Network Services, a company of the International Air Transport Association, IATA.

IATA's mission is to represent, lead, and serve the airline industry. Our members comprise some 280 airlines in over 117 countries, carrying 83 percent of the world's passengers and cargo traffic by air. IATA greatly appreciates the opportunity to testify on the need to modernize the TSA. Every day, the policies of the TSA have a direct impact on the majority of the 120 IATA members flying to, from, and within the United States on a regularly scheduled basis.

The TSA is, indeed, a critical component of the security of the international aviation system. As with any organization, we do believe there are a number of areas that could be improved in order to enable the agency to continue its important mission as effectively and efficiently as possible. Given that the TSA has never been reauthorized in its history, we applaud the Subcommittee for its efforts on this bill that would bring about changes to the agency in a thoughtful and responsible way. We would like to comment on the following issues addressed in the Subcommittee's draft proposal.

A Five-year Term of the TSA Administrator. We strongly support a 5-year term for the TSA Administrator. The agency has been challenged in the past when faced with disruptive transitions between numerous administrators.

The TSA Organization. We believe that TSA management should be reflective of the global nature of commercial air transportation and avoid treating domestic different than international travel.

TSA should align its domestic and international operations with International Civil Aviation Organization, ICAO, security policies and standards to promote global harmonization.

Biometrics Expansion. IATA strongly supports the use of biometrics in improving the passenger facilitation process. We note with some concern that the TSA is currently pursuing a biometric solution using fingerprints, while CBP is testing facial recognition biometric capture in its entry and proposed exit system. We encourage the TSA and CBP to coordinate their efforts in this regard and utilize biometric capture technology that minimizes negative impacts on passenger flows.

Third Party Canines. IATA supports the use of third party, TSA-approved canines for both public passenger areas and for air cargo. Canines have proven to be the most efficient means to screen passenger and cargo in a timely, cost-effective manner. We urge the TSA to move this program forward as expeditiously as possible. We recommend that the TSA consult with other Federal Government agencies for guidance and best practices.

Public Area Best Practices. IATA shares the Subcommittee's support for sharing best practices for securing airport public areas. IATA has worked closely with airports and government agencies around the world to improve processes at airport public acceptance areas and screening queues as well as with general airport design. We are confident that the TSA would benefit from the experiences of many of these airports.

TSA PreCheck Program. IATA supports the expansion of TSA PreCheck Program, as we do with similar known passenger programs around the world. We need to ensure that the significant benefits of PreCheck are not lost by a reduction in personnel managing those lines.

Passenger Security Fee Diversions. IATA strongly opposes the diversion of aviation-related fees for non-aviation purposes. Congress should end these fee diversions and allow the funds already being collected to be used for their original stated purposes. We also oppose any attempt to use fees paid by aviation to cross-subsidize other modes of transportation. The policy against cross-subsidization, long established in U.S. air transport agreements, derives directly from principles long championed by the U.S. within ICAO.

Known Shipper and Indirect Air Carrier Programs. The Known Shipper and Indirect Air Carrier Programs need review. We strongly support a review of both those programs for air cargo. We believe a review of these programs will enable us to identify ways to use technology to reduce risk and improve cargo processing.

Last Point of Departure Airports and Security Directives. We strongly support requiring the TSA Administrator to consult with trade association representatives for affected air carriers and airports. IATA and its 120 members who serve the U.S. want to work closer to be partners with the TSA when it comes to aviation security.

Chairman Blunt, Ranking Member Cantwell and members of the Subcommittee, thank you again for inviting me to participate in this important discussion on modernizing the TSA. IATA looks forward to working with you and your staff on this bill and further

legislation in the future to enhance safety and security of our aviation system.

I am happy to answer any questions you may have.
[The prepared statement of Mr. White follows:]

PREPARED STATEMENT OF MICHAEL WHITE, VICE PRESIDENT, GOVERNMENT AND INDUSTRY RELATIONS, CARGO NETWORK SERVICES CORPORATION, INTERNATIONAL AIR TRANSPORT ASSOCIATION

Chairman Blunt, Ranking Member Cantwell, and members of the Subcommittee on Aviation Operations, Safety, and Security, thank you for inviting me to participate in today's hearing on modernizing the Transportation Security Administration (TSA).

My name is Michael White and I am the Vice President of Government and Industry Relations for Cargo Network Services Corporation, a company of the International Air Transport Association, or IATA.

IATA's mission is to represent, lead and serve the airline industry. Our members comprise some 280 airlines in over 117 countries, carrying 83 percent of the world's passenger and cargo traffic by air.

IATA greatly appreciates the opportunity to testify on the need to modernize the TSA. Every day, the policies of the TSA have a direct impact on the majority of the 120 IATA member airlines flying to, from, and within the United States on a regularly scheduled basis.

The Transportation Security Administration is indeed a critical component to the security of the international aviation system. Since its inception, the agency has grown into what is today a mature organization that is well equipped to meet the ever-changing needs of the aviation security environment. However, as with any organization, we do believe there are a number of areas that could be improved in order to enable the agency to continue in its important mission as effectively and efficiently as possible.

Given that the TSA has never been reauthorized in its history, we applaud the Subcommittee for its effort to draft the TSA Modernization Act to help bring about changes to the agency in a thoughtful and responsible way. We would like to comment on the following issues addressed in the Subcommittee's draft proposal:

5-Year Term for the TSA Administrator

We strongly support a five-year term for the TSA Administrator. The agency has been challenged in the past when faced with disruptive transitions between numerous Administrators. We believe a 5-year term will give an Administrator the time he/she needs to promote the organization's mission in a consistent and coherent fashion. It is consistent with the term of the FAA Administrator, whose agency faces similar challenges on the safety side and has benefited from the stability that has come with a 5-year appointment.

TSA Organization

We believe that TSA management should be reflective of the global nature of commercial air transportation and avoid treating domestic different than international travel. To that end, we believe there should be greater alignment between the Office of Strategic Policy and Industry Engagement (OSPIE), which normally addresses domestic security, and the Office of Global Strategy (OGS), which normally addresses international security matters. To the extent practical, TSA should align its domestic and international operations with International Civil Aviation Organization (ICAO) security policies and standards to promote global harmonization.

Biometrics Expansion

IATA strongly supports the use of biometrics in improving the passenger facilitation process. We note with some concern that the TSA is currently pursuing a biometric solution using fingerprints while U.S. Customs and Border Protection (CBP) is testing facial recognition biometric capture in its entry and proposed exit system. We encourage the TSA and CBP to coordinate their efforts in this regard and utilize biometric capture technology that minimizes negative impacts on passenger flows.

Third Party Canines

IATA supports the use of third party TSA-approved canines for both public passenger areas and for air cargo. Canines have proven to be the most efficient means to screen passenger and cargo in a timely and cost-effective manner. We urge the TSA to move this program forward as expeditiously as possible. We recommend that

the TSA consult with other Federal Government agencies (State, DOD, CBP) for guidance and best practices.

Public Area Best Practices

IATA shares the Subcommittee's support for sharing best practices for securing airport public areas. IATA has worked closely with airports and government agencies around the world to improve processes at airport public acceptance areas and screening queues as well as with general airport design. We are confident the TSA would benefit from the experiences of many of these foreign airports.

TSA Pre✓® Program

IATA supports the expansion of the TSA Pre✓® program as we do with similar known passenger programs around the world. We need to ensure that the significant benefits of TSA Pre✓® are not lost by a reduction in personnel managing those lanes.

Passenger Security Fee Diversions

IATA strongly opposes the diversion of aviation-related fees for non-aviation purposes. In 2013, Congress increased the TSA Passenger Security Fee from \$5.00 per segment to \$5.60 per one-way trip and used the surplus revenue as a pay-for. This is projected to raise \$15.79 billion through Fiscal Year 2025 under the guise of aviation security and diverted to the general fund. Congress should end these fee diversions and allow the funds already being collected to be used for their original stated purpose. We also oppose any attempt to use fees paid by aviation to cross-subsidize other modes of transportation.

In addition to being bad public policy, these actions have the potential to violate existing international agreements to which the U.S. is a party. The U.S. Government has entered into bilateral aviation agreements with over 100 countries, all of which include a clear prohibition against governments imposing user fees that exceed the costs of the services provided to commercial aviation. Further, the policy against cross-subsidization—long established in U.S. air transport agreements—derives directly from principles long championed by the U.S. within ICAO.

Known Shipper and Indirect Carrier Programs Review

We strongly support a review of the Known Shipper and Indirect Air Carrier programs. These programs were developed in the 1990s and enhanced after 9/11. Since that time, we have much better data and technology to secure and track cargo shipments. CBP has used the Automated Commercial Environment (ACE) system to collect trade data both in and out of the United States for all modes of transportation. Technology has also moved to a less paper-intensive environment for most government agencies. The data collected offers the opportunity for a more effective and efficient risk-based screening process. We are hopeful this review will enable us to identify ways to use the technology to reduce risk and improve cargo processing.

Last Point of Departure Airports; Security Directives

We strongly support requiring that the Administrator consult with trade association representatives for affected air carriers and airports. To that end, it is important to note that the majority of passengers and air cargo arriving in the United States is flown on non-U.S. carriers. The TSA often consults with U.S. carriers in advance of the issuance of Emergency Amendments (EAs) and Security Directives (SD), which enables those carriers to provide meaningful input into that discussion and prepare their operations in advance to support TSA's security needs. Unfortunately, these advance consultations have not taken place on a regular basis with non-U.S. carriers, either directly or through IATA. This has led to situations where the TSA's mission has been undermined because of a lack of understanding for or appreciation of the various operational, governmental, or fiscal challenges facing carriers seeking to meet new requirements. While we recognize that appropriate security clearances are needed for these types of discussions, accommodations must be made in order to ensure effective and timely implementation of these critical security directives.

Chairman Blunt, Ranking Member Cantwell, and members of the Subcommittee on Aviation Operations, Safety, and Security, thank you again for inviting me to participate in this important discussion on modernizing the TSA. IATA looks forward to working with you and your staff as you craft legislation to enhance the safety and security of our Nation's aviation system.

Senator BLUNT. Thank you, Mr. White.

For the Members who arrived after we started, we'll try to keep the hearing moving during the vote that's coming up, and I'll stay for a little while and do that. I may get to questions then.

So we'll start with Senator Cantwell and then we'll go to Senator Inhofe.

Senator CANTWELL. Thank you, Mr. Chairman. I appreciate the panelists being pretty endorsing—I guess is the right way to say it—of the canine program included in the legislation that was introduced. We're big believers in what TSA and Homeland and everybody else has told us about the efficiency of these dogs, both in detecting explosives as well as helping to move fast-paced lines that are challenged in very congested airports like I mentioned at Sea-Tac.

So, Mr. Alterman, you also believe that they have great opportunity to help us in the cargo area. You mentioned the supply chain. So what is it that you think will best help us in the canine units and getting more canine units in our airports?

Mr. ALTERMAN. Well, I think the legislation helps, because it puts a shining light on the need for it. We've talked a lot about technology on this panel, and that's absolutely necessary. Dogs are sort of the low-tech solution, but a very important one.

In the air cargo area, our businesses are expanding, our requirements for screening freight are expanding, and at least at the present moment, technology doesn't do the job. We don't have the right technology. We absolutely need the canines to do that, and in order to do that, we need a program that TSA is currently working on that actually substantially mirrors the language in this legislation.

We all wish it would move faster. The bureaucracy sometimes moves a little too slowly for all of us. So we're looking forward to that. I was hoping that by the time of this hearing, I could tell you that they're in the process of implementing that canine program. I expected to see something about 3 weeks ago. We haven't seen it yet. You know, it's always tomorrow that we're going to be doing this. So I am looking forward to the program that TSA is developing. We just hope that there aren't any glitches or deviations from what the proposed legislation has in it.

Senator CANTWELL. Any ideas about why that is moving slowly? Do you know?

Mr. ALTERMAN. It's a bureaucracy. Well, I actually do, and at the risk of—well, let me say this first. Probably, the way TSA works internally is none of my damned business. But that's one of the problems. The problem is that, as in any bureaucracy, there are various pieces of the agency with various portions of this project, and they don't always get along with each other that well. So I think that one of the reasons that we do not yet have a canine program is the lack of coordination between the various parts of TSA, and nobody seems to be totally in charge that can bang heads together and actually get it done, and I think that's simply a bureaucratic problem.

Senator CANTWELL. Well, thank you for illuminating it this morning, and I find here that illuminating some of these things does help us. The efficacy of the program is very important, as you know, in making sure the dogs are trained and skilled for this kind

of detection, and making sure they meet that standard is very important. But, obviously, probably everybody on this committee has seen some pretty amazing things done by these canine units—I mean just amazing things.

So on the cargo side, you're talking about a large scale deployment or a targeted first?

Mr. ALTERMAN. Well, the cargo industry is very diverse, and so making one comment on that is very difficult. I think different members of our industry would use the dogs differently. I know that at least one company wants to use them fairly extensively, and others just as a supplement to other things.

I think the important thing is not to limit the program initially, but rather let the marketplace take its form, and let the people who want to use the dogs go and rent the dogs from qualified people who have been trained by people who know how to train them and have been certified by people that have been certified by TSA, and then just let the marketplace take care of it. I don't think one-size-fits-all in this program works.

Senator CANTWELL. Well, that is why we want the flexibility in the program, particularly as it relates to passenger screening at our airports, and we're so glad that you guys have all supported that concept and we're going to get to move forward on that. Our airports are showing that these dogs—and I just go back to the horrible situations we've seen in Europe. People tell us that the security—that they would have detected somebody the minute they walked into the airport terminal. To me, that is the kind of deterrence that we need, as well as the expediting of the processing at our really very congested airports. So thank you very much.

Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

Senator BLUNT. Senator Inhofe.

STATEMENT OF HON. JIM INHOFE, U.S. SENATOR FROM OKLAHOMA

Senator INHOFE. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

I have to say, Mr. Alterman, that's one of the better descriptions that I've heard of bureaucratic problems. I've written it down.

[Laughter.]

Senator INHOFE. You know, I'm new to this committee, but we've already had—you've been here as a witness before, and it has been fascinating to me as we watch the successes and some things that are working and aren't working. But it seems like every time someone testifies, they come right back to the issue of the canines, you know, the dogs are there, and I fail to see what the problem is.

You know, first of all, you say that anyone who is training these dogs has to be certified by the TSA. Is that correct?

Mr. ALTERMAN. The way the program is going to work—and I believe the language in the legislation—TSA would set the standards for suppliers of the dogs to use. They would be trained—

Senator INHOFE. You say would. Have they already done this?

Mr. ALTERMAN. They are in the process of doing it. They've already set the standards for their own dogs—the TSA dogs that are currently operating. I haven't seen standards for the third-party canine program for screening air cargo. But I can't imagine those standards are going to be very different from what they've already

done. So my guess is that part of the process has been done, but I haven't seen it, finally.

Senator INHOFE. I just don't see the problem with this, because—

Mr. ALTERMAN. Well, neither do we, sir.

Senator INHOFE. Well, what I'm saying is I've been the ranking member on the Senate Armed Services Committee. We have the same problem right there in getting the adequate number of dogs. The talent is there. People train—there are a number of people who train them. But if they have to be certified by the TSA, and they haven't yet done it, the question would be—and you're not the TSA so I can't ask you, but I will ask the TSA—why haven't they already done it?

And then guidelines, for example. What role do higher education institutions play in this? Are they involved in this?

Mr. ALTERMAN. They certainly can be. They're not specifically involved in this. But, certainly, the educational institutions—and there are several of them around the country that are involved very intimately in the canine program.

Senator INHOFE. One of those is Oklahoma State University, and yet when I went over to check, they don't actually get involved in training the dogs. They're think tanks. They're putting together programs—what do we want, what do—it seems to me that we're beyond that point. So I think this Committee could be helpful in trying to actually go out there and get more dogs. I mean, there are lots of other issues here, but that's one that consistently has come up.

So are you familiar with some of the programs like Oklahoma State University?

Mr. ALTERMAN. I'm familiar with some programs. Auburn has one. Oklahoma State has one. There are several other universities. I'm not intimately familiar with exactly what they're doing. But they have a role in this. They clearly have a role in this, and any help that they can be to the TSA, I'm sure TSA would be glad to take.

Senator INHOFE. OK. Well, I just want to get to the point where we actually get more dogs.

Now, all of you have talked about the 5-year term, which I think would be consistent with the FAA and their five-year term. Is this something that you all agree on? We were here and we did go ahead and approve a Director, and I think we went without a Director for about 8 months. So that is a hardship, so we will pursue that.

I didn't realize my time has expired.

Thank you.

Senator BLUNT. I don't think your time had expired. You have a minute.

Senator INHOFE. Oh, well, on my little clock, it said—OK. Well, that's—

[Laughter.]

Senator INHOFE. Maybe that's a message just to me.

Senator BLUNT. Maybe in the interest of time, we'll just move on.

Senator INHOFE. No, let me ask one final question.

Mr. White, you mentioned the fee diversion that's taking place. Tell us about these fee diversions. Are they with the PFCs or what?

Mr. WHITE. Well, the security charges don't always remain at—for the purpose they were designed for. Some of the funding does go into other agencies outside.

Senator INHOFE. Can you give some specific examples?

Mr. WHITE. There are some that are used, for instance, for ocean and the purpose of screening passengers on the ocean side. There's other things that are being used to—for just in general funds that are not for security purposes. I don't have specifics, but we can give you a list of those.

Senator INHOFE. OK, for the record. I'd be interested in knowing that.

Mr. WHITE. We'll be glad to get those for you.

[The information referred to follows:]

CARGO NETWORK SERVICES CORP
Miami, FL, November 8, 2017

Hon. JAMES M. INHOFE,
Russell Senate Office Building,
Washington, DC.

Re: Subcommittee on Aviation Operations, Safety, and Security Hearing—TSA Modernization: Improvements to Aviation Security; September 28, 2017

Dear Senator Inhofe:

This letter is in response to your request during the September 28, 2017 subcommittee hearing for specific examples of where Congress has increased aviation-related user fees to pay for items unrelated to aviation. Below are three of the most recent examples:

- The Bipartisan Budget Act of 2013 (P.L. 113–67) increased the TSA Passenger Security Fee from \$5.00 per segment to \$5.60 per one-way trip and directed that a portion of those fees, totaling \$12.63 billion, in Fiscal Years 2014 through 2023 be deposited into the general fund.
- The Surface Transportation and Veterans Health Care Choice Improvement Act of 2015 (P.L. 114–41) extended the authorization to divert a portion of the TSA Passenger Security Fee increase through Fiscal Year 2025, adding another \$3.16 billion to the general fund.
- The Fixing America's Surface Transportation (FAST) Act (P.L. 114–94) indexed customs user fees beginning in Fiscal Year 2015 to increases in the Consumer Price Index and used the estimated \$5.7 billion revenue increase as a pay-for. Of this amount, \$932 million is estimated to come from aviation.

While CNS and IATA appreciate the funding challenges currently facing the Congress, we strongly believe that any aviation-related user fees should be used for their intended purpose and that airlines and their customers should not be asked to fund other, unrelated government programs. We appreciate your support and look forward to working with you and your office on this important issue in the future.

Sincerely,

MICHAEL R. WHITE,
Vice President, Government and Industry Relations.

cc: Members of the U.S. Senate Committee on Commerce, Science, and Transportation—Subcommittee on Aviation Operations, Safety, and Security

Senator INHOFE. Thank you very much.

Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

Senator BLUNT. Thank you.

Senator Klobuchar and then Senator Hassan.

**STATEMENT OF HON. AMY KLOBUCHAR,
U.S. SENATOR FROM MINNESOTA**

Senator KLOBUCHAR. Thank you very much, Mr. Chair. We had a very good experience in the Minneapolis-St. Paul Airport, which is a major hub, by adding dogs. We had severe wait lines, and then, at the time, TSA Administrator Neffenger came in and brought more dog teams, including one team of dogs that, unfortunately for them, got relocated from Maui to the Twin Cities.

[Laughter.]

Senator KLOBUCHAR. But it made a huge benefit. So I would just add what my colleagues, Senator Cantwell and Senator Inhofe, have said about the value, not just for security, which is key and the most important thing, but also for efficiency at a very, very busy airport.

I thought I would ask about the TSA PreCheck program. It increases efficiency and security. Mr. Weiler, from your perspective from Missouri, what strategies have been effective in promoting the program, and how are we assured, I guess, Mr. White, that those benefits don't get taken away by longer lines in the PreCheck? I've started to see longer lines in that like the regular one. So let's talk a little bit about that.

Mr. WEILER. Sure. Thank you, Senator. We have seen an increase in the use of it, and I think it's impacted our general line, which is good. I think the more we can do to highlight the program—and I really like how the bill sets specific enrollment targets out there to increase that. But, as I said, it's still somewhat clunky. You can get online. You can complete your data to submit it. But when you have to do that follow-up interview—at least, at my airport, we only have one enrollment center, and it's nowhere near the airport. It's functioning, but it takes months to do that.

So I think bringing the devices that we all now have, having that technology and bringing those things, and opening up more to more vendors to increase it would be very good.

Senator KLOBUCHAR. Do you think a clear definition of wait time would be helpful?

Mr. WEILER. We do, we do, as well.

Senator KLOBUCHAR. Mr. White.

Mr. WHITE. On the issue of the lanes themselves, we're seeing at some airports—and you've probably seen it here at the Washington airports—where the PreCheck lines are getting longer and longer. I think part of the issue you have to look at is back to the data perspective as to how many passengers are going to go through every day. Can we look at some of the data that determines the actual movement of where the officers and inspectors should be in a day? Are you going to have more PreCheck passengers or not? Can you take your manpower flows for those days and—so I think there's a lot of capability based off the airline information and the airports' information on helping rearrange where some of those lanes are.

The other thing, though, that we want—we do want more people in PreCheck. It does reduce the time, and it does help put the flow of passengers faster through the terminal. But then you have the whole issue of the design of the airports and such.

Senator KLOBUCHAR. How about best practices for security at airport public areas? We've seen in other countries, of course, major issues there.

Mr. WHITE. IATA has worked with other airports around the world, because our security groups do work directly with airports in many other parts of the world. So we look at time studies. We do actual views of the flow of the passengers as related to the security inside the terminal. So is that, you know, the public area and some of the things like we found in Fort Lauderdale?

Those are difficult challenges, in baggage claim areas and others. We have to re-look at that, but I think that's where we can take some of the studies that we've done on simplifying the business product on the passenger side that we work with the airlines on to see how we could put that into a security realm better.

Senator KLOBUCHAR. OK. Thanks.

Mr. Alterman, you called for TSA to have a more centralized focus on air cargo supply chain. How should TSA change in order to focus on air cargo security?

Mr. ALTERMAN. That's a tough one. But let me preface my answer by saying once upon a time, TSA had an air cargo division with scores of people. I think the numbers were about 40 people, and that whole division focused on air cargo security, and it cut across lines. About 5 years ago—I believe it was 2012—that whole air cargo division was disbanded, and the people that were working on air cargo were spread throughout the agency.

Since then, there hasn't been within the agency a centralized focus on air cargo. So what we have is the OSO, the operation security people, making some policy on it, and other people making policy on other areas.

Senator KLOBUCHAR. Could I just ask you one question? Maybe you could finish that one in writing, since I'm out of time.

Mr. ALTERMAN. Sure.

Senator KLOBUCHAR. Would you like a 5-year term for the TSA Administrator and Deputy Administrator for some more continuity?

Mr. ALTERMAN. Absolutely.

Senator KLOBUCHAR. Excellent answer. Thank you.

Senator BLUNT. Thank you, Senator.

Senator Hassan.

**STATEMENT OF HON. MAGGIE HASSAN,
U.S. SENATOR FROM NEW HAMPSHIRE**

Senator HASSAN. Thank you, Mr. Chair.

And thank you to the witnesses for being here today.

Mr. Weiler, I wanted to thank you for your testimony and follow up a little bit on the realities of managing a small to medium size airport. As a manager of a small airport, I would expect—and your testimony certainly suggested—that you struggle with some of the same security and funding challenges that other such airports do, like the one in my City of Manchester, New Hampshire.

As you know, the President's budget request eliminates the TSA grants to reimburse state and local law enforcement for their patrols of airports and the surrounding areas, and it also dramatically cuts VIPR teams. When the budget came out earlier this year, I asked then Secretary of DHS Kelly during a Senate Homeland

Security Committee hearing about why the administration cut these programs, even though our aviation system is facing increased threats?

Secretary Kelly's response to my question was that from DHS' perspective, the state and local law enforcement would have to shoulder more of the burden for securing the airport and its surrounding areas, given that airports generate so much revenue for states and municipalities. I reminded him at the time that at least in my state of New Hampshire, budgets are pretty slim and local property taxpayers aren't eager to increase their property tax rates anymore.

So I understand from your testimony that your airport runs on an enterprise fund and has its own 10 uniformed police officers patrolling the airport. How much does maintaining that force cost? And, additionally, does that police force—would that be able to stay up and running if your local enforcement grants are cut?

Mr. WEILER. Senator, it's a constant challenge. We cover a large geographic area. Our airport is 3,300 acres. We do rely heavily, as do the other 300 airports, on this law enforcement officer program. Airports may be seen as a cash cow, but, honestly, it's probably more in terms of the economic impact that they generate. They don't really generate money for the local entity.

So the bill does call for increased security in public areas, baggage, around ticket checkpoints, things like that, which we all agree are good. But at least the draft bill from this committee also increases the funding for the LEO to provide those resources, at especially small airports. There's only so many places I can go, and the airlines that operate there that our communities rely heavily on, in a lot of cases, I have no choice but to pass those fees along to them, and to them it may actually be the point of losing a route or gaining an additional frequency. So it's a focus on us, a constant challenge to maintain that balance. We all want good security, but there's only so much money in the bank for us.

Senator HASSAN. Well, thank you for that, and then a question to both you and Mr. White. In the past, this Subcommittee has focused on insider threats at airports and increasing the capacity of TSA to screen airport workers. However, one potentially overlooked area of insider threat vetting is the security and authenticity of pilots' licenses.

According to a recent *Boston Globe* investigation, the Federal Aviation Administration has issued pilots' licenses and credentials to applicants without having fully vetted the pilot first. And the investigation found that at least five pilots with active licenses matched watch list records for their connection to terrorism or international crime. So, obviously, this is a really startling report and discovery. The lapse appears to stem from insufficient communication between FAA and TSA, as well as the FAA's inability to validate the authenticity of personal information on pilots' licenses at the time of the application.

So to both of you, Mr. White and Mr. Weiler, your constituencies rely heavily on the trustworthiness and reliability of pilots, obviously. Would you support holding pilots, at a minimum, to the same security standards as we do airport workers?

Mr. White, why don't you start?

Mr. WHITE. I think it's something that would be looked at. But from the commercial airlines license, if we're looking at commercial pilots, I think the scrutiny goes beyond just what the governments themselves do, as to what the companies and airlines also are looking at. From an international perspective, we're looking at, for multiple purposes of securing them, the individuals that are flying those aircraft, with local governments where they're based and with the U.S. Government.

So there's a multiple look at that. I'm not sure—I'm not aware of that study, but it's something I can go back and find more information on.

Senator HASSAN. We'll be happy to get you a copy of the report. It's relatively recent. It was very concerning to me. That's why I'm bringing it up.

Mr. Weiler.

Mr. WEILER. I can't speak to that specific issue as well, but I do know known threat and possibly even 100 percent screening has been used effectively at some airports. I will tell you it does have airports our size very concerned. Again, it's a resource issue. We have focused working with TSA on more of a random approach, limiting the number of access points for employees, doing random screening, and leaving that expectation with any airport employee that they could be screened at any time. We focused on that, and we think it's a good balance.

Senator HASSAN. Well, I thank you, and I see that I'm out of time. I will add my voice to the chorus concerning VIPR teams and dogs and enhancing TSA PreCheck.

Thank you.

Senator BLUNT. Thank you, Senator.

One good reason to have a hearing is it forces you to come up with a bill, and so I'm pleased to have your reaction to the bill we filed last night. I do think it includes most of the concerns that some of you have previously shared both with the Committee generally and in testimony.

One new thing we put in here, Mr. Weiler, was the ability to look at the exit lane with a pilot project on a different kind of security. Now, your airport, the one I use a lot—you're approaching a million passengers a year. Is that right?

Mr. WEILER. That is correct.

Senator BLUNT. And what would be your comfort with the security and the economics of the idea of not having a person at the exit lane all the time?

Mr. WEILER. Senator, for us, it's a win-win. There is good technology on the market to be able to automate these lanes. They're used at many airports very safely and securely. For our airport, since we both share the staffing with TSA and with the airport, they would actually save more money than we do because they staff their lane longer. But yet there is no program for them to share that cost with us. So I think the idea of a cost-share program is a win-win. Ultimately, it should save both the airport and TSA funds down the road. So we just see this as a win-win.

Senator BLUNT. And you're comfortable with the security element of that?

Mr. WEILER. I am, Senator.

Senator BLUNT. There are exit lane abilities that no one would be able to get in the other way without immediately triggering—

Mr. WEILER. The technology that is there, and if you've seen them—they are installed at more and more airports, especially the larger ones that bear that cost. It's very secure. You are not allowed to go back. It is monitored. Alarms will sound. Again, this is proven technology. I'm not saying it can't get better, but I do think the security is there.

Senator BLUNT. One of the things the law allows is the private contractor coming in and providing TSA security. The Kansas City Airport is one of the handful of airports in the country that does that. At one time, your airport considered it. Is that still something you occasionally look at, or why have you moved back to the TSA in a more traditional way?

Mr. WEILER. You're right, Senator. It has been used at many airports effectively, and we have looked at it in the past. We are currently not looking at implementing private screening. We have a good partnership with TSA. However, the airport would very much like to maintain this ability, and I know other airports would as well down the road, should that be an option based on local conditions we could still apply to the partnership program.

Senator BLUNT. Let me ask a question of everybody here as I finish my question time. If you could immediately change one thing about the current approach to aviation security, what would that one change be?

Mr. White, we're going to start with you and come back this way.

Mr. WEILER. I think this bill is a major step in the right direction.

Senator BLUNT. I'm starting with Mr. White.

Mr. WEILER. Oh, I'm sorry. I thought—

Mr. WHITE. I think if you had one thing to do, it's having to develop a partnership that's truly open with the security expertise of the people in aviation and that of the government. That's the biggest thing we're lacking, because we don't have that real true partnership, particularly with our foreign carriers, which, for us, represents a very large chunk of the transport that's coming into the U.S.

Without that, we can't work and share the knowledge that—there's a real lack of sharing of knowledge between the individuals within the aviation commercial industry and the government. It's very one-sided, and if we can get away from that, then we can really start making the change.

Senator BLUNT. And in your other testimony, you said you'd like to see much more of a standard that was consistent with both domestic and international?

Mr. WHITE. Exactly, because the TSA right now seems to be divided in a domestic mode and an international mode. It's aviation. It's not one or the other.

Senator BLUNT. All right. I don't want to run out of time here.

Ms. Pressnell, one thing you would change if you could. It's OK if it's in this bill, but something we're not doing now.

Ms. PRESSNELL. Well, the main concern that we have, obviously, is the ability to get technology into the field faster. The U.S. deserves the best technology it can have at any given time, and we

believe that the process that currently exists is one that actually slows down the process and actually puts us behind some of our foreign counterparts who deploy technology that's somewhat more advanced.

Senator BLUNT. Mr. Alterman?

Mr. ALTERMAN. To follow up on what Mr. White said, security always works better when the government and industry are working together. I think one of the big things we need to change and improve upon is the sharing of intelligence information. We've discovered, sometimes the hard way, that if we had better intelligence, we could stop things. All the rules and security programs are fine, but we really need to work together to share intelligence so that we can mitigate the threats.

Senator BLUNT. And by that, you're principally meaning for them to share more of the threats that are out there with those of you who are doing the shipping and the cargo?

Mr. ALTERMAN. Yes. TSA, frankly, can't share information it doesn't have. It goes both ways. There needs to be better intelligence sharing for TSA among government agencies, which don't seem to share very well—

Senator BLUNT. Got it.

Mr. ALTERMAN.—and then passing it on to the industry, yes.

Senator BLUNT. Mr. Weiler, your one thing?

Mr. WEILER. Airports want to be a part of the table and be there and collaborate, but we do not have unlimited resources.

Senator BLUNT. Senator Booker.

**STATEMENT OF HON. CORY BOOKER,
U.S. SENATOR FROM NEW JERSEY**

Senator BOOKER. Mr. Chairman, I'd happily defer to my more senior colleague.

Senator BLUNT. Everybody here has asked questions. We're down to you.

Senator BOOKER. OK. Would you mark my level of deference for the record, please?

[Laughter.]

Senator BLUNT. There'll be a moment when you may need that.

Senator BOOKER. Yes, sir.

I'm very grateful for you all being here, and it's often that we are reactive to crises as opposed to proactive, and then everyone wants to do sort of a post mortem about what happened. I often worry that when it comes to our security issues at airports, we're often chasing after the last breach and not really trying to see what's happening in the future ones. That's why I found your comment very interesting about watching other nations implement things a lot quicker than we are doing.

So I'd like to just maybe—maybe I can start with you, Mr. White. You know, I see things through the Newark lens. I live a few miles from the airport. It was amazing to me traveling around Europe, seeing the automated screening process, which is actually quicker, and it seems to be more effective. I'm wondering if you have any feedback regarding sort of those new processes or the automatic screeners and the mechanization. Is that something that you see as

productive in terms of not just speed, but also when it comes to the quality of the screening that we're doing?

Mr. WHITE. I think you have to take a look at the whole process. If you take a look at the European programs, some of the things, for instance, approval of screeners, are different than the U.S. Some are more stringent. That standard, from our perspective—we work closely with the government on those sorts of things, and we want to share that kind of information. But the TSA has a mindset of what they want, because most of the inspectors are TSA employees. In most governments around the world, it's not so. But the oversight is there, so the security component is still there. So there are efficiencies that we could be gaining, learning from our counterparts.

The PED situation, with carrying the personal electronic devices, for us on the passenger side was quite an issue, because the foreign governments had programs that we thought were very effective, but the TSA did not. So there needed to be better discussion between governments on how some of those things were better—there's technology that was used by other governments that may be considered, because it had been implemented faster and quicker, as Ms. Pressnell was saying.

So it is a whole—just of bringing people together, and it's very siloed in the TSA, and I think that's what we're kind of all saying, that the TSA is so siloed internally and externally, and that we need to bring some of this expertise in with them.

Senator BOOKER. I appreciate that, and that goes to the point you were making, Mr. Alterman, which I found interesting. Maybe I could just make the comparison of traveling to Israel versus here. It seems that they have, first of all, a far more efficient system, it seems, in terms of the speed with which people can go through. But it seems like they're using a tremendous amount of background checks as well as intelligence sharing to look at plane manifests.

Is this something that, really, we should be looking at? Clearly, that's a nation that faces terrorist threats at our level or worse.

Mr. ALTERMAN. On the surface, maybe. The problem is that the Israeli aviation system is so much smaller and limited than the United States system. My concern is if you impose the Israeli system on the United States, no one would ever move anywhere, just because of the magnitude of the people that move. But, certainly, what they're doing might be able to be adapted to the U.S. system, and I, frankly, don't know whether that's being done now or not. But we always need to be looking for better ways of doing things.

Terrorists are not dumb, and, you know, the comment that we always seem to be looking at and trying to solve yesterday's problems is one of the major concerns and one of the major challenges. I was very happy that in the final draft of the bill, there was a reference to someone looking forward and doing forward-looking things, and I think the agency needs to do that.

Senator BOOKER. Well, I only have a few seconds left. So I just really, very rapidly—when I—you know, I know a lot of the folks at Newark Airport, and a lot of the TSA agents I know on personal levels. And when I ask them, "What else do you need? What's happening?" the common complaint that I get is that there's not enough personnel, that they need more people. Just really quickly,

is that a yes or a no? Do you agree that we should—are we staffed the way we need to be at airports across the country, or do we need to be focusing on more resources for staffing?

Mr. WHITE. I think you do have issues with personnel at different airports, but that varies by airport. But there's technology that may be in use that we can improve on, because if you look at the canine situation where we brought canines to clear passengers the summer before last with all the backlogs, that was a way to use something that was out there as a tool. But you have to balance it.

Senator BOOKER. And, Mr. Chairman, right before I pass off, I just want to say, first of all, I'm so grateful for this hearing. It's so important. I've been saying, though, for a long time that there's so much focus on our airports, rightfully so, but part of them—part of the obligation for TSA was to come back with a plan also for our rail system. You're seeing so many attacks now on rail systems in the United States. We have such a small, paltry percentage of our TSA assets protecting our rails. I just want to say I know this hearing—it's the topic of it, but I have a growing level of frustration that we don't have a plan to protect our rails in the United States.

Thank you.

Senator BLUNT. Thank you, Senator Booker.

Senator Markey.

**STATEMENT OF HON. EDWARD MARKEY,
U.S. SENATOR FROM MASSACHUSETTS**

Senator MARKEY. Thank you, Mr. Chairman, very much.

Obviously, this began with Mohamed Atta and the other nine at Logan Airport on September 11, 2001, and we continue to try to make sure that we do our best to protect the American public. Our nation's transportation security officers are tasked with the important mission of detecting and forestalling threats to passengers, crew, and aircraft.

Regrettably, airline fees may be making this job far more difficult. In May, Secretary John Kelly stated that passengers trying to avoid exorbitant checked bag fees, up to \$120 for two bags round trip, are cramming their belongings into smaller carry-on bags. These carry-ons have become so dense that screeners may be having difficulty identifying dangerous items.

For all of the witnesses, do you agree with Secretary Kelly that TSA screeners may have more difficulty detecting dangerous items in densely packed carry-on bags?

Mr. WHITE. We haven't, from our side, seen anything that's been initiated. The same technology that's basically used for the carry-on bags is the same technology being used for the checked bags.

Senator MARKEY. So you don't agree with Secretary Kelly.

Mr. WHITE. Not necessarily.

Senator MARKEY. Ms. Pressnell?

Ms. PRESSNELL. I would disagree as well. The technology is certainly advanced in terms of being able to detect threats down to the most specific item. So I would disagree as well.

Senator MARKEY. You would disagree.

Ms. PRESSNELL. I would disagree with the Secretary that it's causing problems.

Senator MARKEY. Mr. Alterman?

Mr. ALTERMAN. I'm going to do something lawyers should never do. I don't know.

Senator MARKEY. OK. That's great.

Mr. Weiler?

Mr. WEILER. I'm not aware, specifically, of direct TSA from that. However, airports certainly do hear a lot from customers about excessive baggage fees.

Senator MARKEY. OK. Well, in May, I wrote a letter with Senator Blumenthal asking Secretary Kelly about this issue. What we found was very troubling, in fact, very troubling. According to TSA, bag fees do incentivize passengers to carry on luggage, and the screening technologies at TSA screen checkpoints are less sophisticated and advanced as those used for checked baggage. I think that this important issue deserves more study and evaluation, and we're going to be pursuing that in the markup as we move forward on this legislation.

In the confines of the airline cabin, even a small knife can contribute to devastating consequences. That's essentially what happened on 9/11 at Logan Airport in Newark and here in the District of Columbia, which is why I introduced a bill that forbids any changes to the prohibited items that would permit passengers to carry small knives through screening checkpoints, and I'm pleased to see a similar provision in the TSA Modernization Act.

For all of the witnesses, do you agree that we should continue to ban knives on planes?

Mr. Weiler?

Mr. WEILER. Yes.

Senator MARKEY. Mr. Alterman?

Mr. ALTERMAN. Yes.

Ms. PRESSNELL. Yes.

Mr. WHITE. Yes.

Senator MARKEY. Yes, great. So that's all very helpful, and I'm working with Senator Murkowski to ensure that this remains a bipartisan issue as we move forward. I know that you have to make a vote over on the——

Senator CANTWELL [presiding]. I voted.

Senator MARKEY. Oh, you've already voted, and I have already voted. So the Democrats are in charge over here.

[Laughter.]

Senator CANTWELL. Mr. Blunt specifically asked that we not do a lot of mischief while he was gone.

Senator MARKEY. No, No. Just a little humor reflecting the bipartisanship, actually, with which the Senate is able to operate, especially on issues that relate to homeland security. That has been one area where we've been able to stay very closely partnered, and I know that because of what happened on 9/11 and then what happened with the Tsarnaev brothers, who were also in my congressional district, and what they did on Patriot's Day.

So all of that kind of informs what I try to do, and we've made a lot of progress over some opposition over time. But I think we made great progress, you know, back in 2002, 2003, 2004, 2005.

The cargo industry did oppose the screening of cargo going out to passenger planes in the same way that the bags which passengers were bringing onto the plane.

So it took the 2007 law to be able to upgrade that so that there is nothing that goes onto a passenger plane that has items on it that are not screened fully, and the same thing was true for cargo coming in from overseas, so that the screening was made for that. But that took the 2007 law, and that was 5 years, 6 years after the 9/11 incident. So we've made a lot of progress, and I just want to make sure that we absolutely are confident that we can detect any item that could cause a serious problem.

We thank all of our witnesses for being here today, and I thank the gentlelady from Washington.

Senator CANTWELL. Thank you, Senator Markey.

Mr. Weiler, I would like to ask about the exit lane program. We know that it has been a success at some of the larger airports. What is your experience on moving more deployment of this to other regional and small airports?

Mr. WEILER. I think that's the nice thing about the pilot program, Senator. It gives us the opportunity to explore it more, analyze the technology, make sure it works at the smaller airport environments. And for us, again, it focuses on saving money, but making sure we do it in a very secure environment. So we think the pilot program, as I mentioned in my testimony, is a major step forward. I don't know if that answers your question.

Senator CANTWELL. You know, the exit lane doors that are used at airports to, I think, enhance security, and my guess is it helps some of these smaller airports on cost and implementation of security measures.

Mr. WEILER. Yes, and by automating those, we won't have to staff them, so that will definitely be a cost saving for us. You know, again, when the airport staffs it—but this is—Congress has established this is a TSA responsibility, so it will actually save money for TSA in the long run on personnel cost. Hopefully, those assets can be redeployed back to the checkpoint, in general, to improve efficiency and bring more assets to those areas.

Senator CANTWELL. Well, as I said earlier on the canine program, I think all of these things—obviously, Sea-Tac being one of the fastest growing airports in the nation 3 years in a row makes us want to deploy everything that we can that helps us on security and efficiency, and, obviously, the canine units do it. And I think for the pressure, then, that it puts on the other airports, having these exit lanes being also deployed helps on the efficiency side, so all of that.

Mr. White, you mentioned the issue of biometrics and some coordination on biometrics. How do you think that we come to a, if you will, standard that we feel comfortable with from a national and international basis?

Mr. WHITE. I think, first thing, on the U.S. side—

Senator CANTWELL. And I just mean on the technology.

Mr. WHITE. On the technology aspect.

Senator CANTWELL. Yes, just on the technology aspect of it.

Mr. WHITE. Whether one is right, better than the other, you know, that still could be determined. From our perspective, we're working, for instance, with CBP on the exit lanes right now into

the U.S. to see how we can capture those passengers to ensure who's leaving. Is that same technology what should be in place at the checkpoint for TSA? Is that where it starts?

So part of it, from our perspective, is what technology is best, whether it's fingerprint or other. It also ties into what's the efficiency of the airport. So you take Sea-Tac, trying to move more passengers, really, through the same terminal until the expansion starts. But you're moving more people through the same space. Can you use that technology, and which one is better, and where that standard comes from takes a lot of—lots more people that I know, that I am, that we have, and those are the studies that IATA does.

So we've been working with other airports around the world in similar type fashions. Again, it's sharing of information, and work groups that are really involved with that sort of thing. The airlines' perspective is, what's the cost? You know, at the end of the day, there is a cost to all of this, and what makes it more efficient. Do we gain efficiency from it? Does it improve security? We have to look at all those factors.

So technology, as it comes about, one over the other is what's—the latest and greatest. You've really got to delve down into it. So that's where we really want to focus with some of the—a lot of people in the airlines that we have that are really doing that day-to-day work and studying that sort of thing.

Senator CANTWELL. But we don't have a body yet that works. It's more of an informal discussion. Is that what you're saying?

Mr. WHITE. What we're finding is most governments are testing different things in different ways, and I don't know of a formal body, although there are—like through ICAO, there are working groups that are looking at those sorts of things as to, you know, what are the technologies and how do we implement them. IATA has been looking at the express lanes and how we can clear passengers quicker. Is the technology—and we could put it in with the check-in process—make it easier for a passenger to clear?

Senator CANTWELL. Well, we—myself and Senator Collins—have worked on moving our borders to overseas airports and deploying these kinds of technologies as a way to get security before people enter the United States, and we think this is an important question. She and I have worked on the biometrics for quite some time now, and we think we should continue forward.

Senator Duckworth.

**STATEMENT OF HON. TAMMY DUCKWORTH,
U.S. SENATOR FROM ILLINOIS**

Senator DUCKWORTH. Thank you, Madam Ranking Member. I want to thank you and also the Chair for convening today's hearing, and I want to thank our witnesses for participating in this important conversation.

As this Committee moves closer to consider legislation to enhance TSA programs, including TSA's rail security efforts and improving aviation security, I'm encouraged that industry is actually engaged in working with us to address policy gaps and identify appropriate solutions.

Mr. Alterman, as Chairman of TSA's Aviation Security Advisory Committee, can you speak to the agency's efforts to deploy creden-

tial authentication technology for detecting fraudulent identification documents at airport passenger checkpoints?

Mr. ALTERMAN. This goes to—we started that effort in ASAC as a result of insider threat issues that developed out of the Atlanta airport, and the ASAC gave 28 separate recommendations on insider threat, and many of those recommendations had to do with credentialing. We made those recommendations to TSA, and they have been moving forward on them. They've done a pretty good job on that. There were a couple of issues involving interagency issues that they couldn't do right away—the FBI's Rap Back program so we could figure out—we could get access to those.

That's an ongoing issue. I personally don't know exactly where we are in detail on that. But, certainly, the credentialing issue is one that is of constant concern to us because of the potential ability to get fraudulent credentials. So the agency is working on that in response to our recommendations, and they are making progress on that. I honestly can't tell you exactly where they are in that process.

Senator DUCKWORTH. Well, we'll have to follow up with you on it. I want to also touch on the air cargo advanced screening pilot program that took place. As you know, it was established after authorities discovered two U.S.-bound packages from Yemen, and they contained viable bombs, capable of bringing down aircraft, and it was determined by forensic experts that they were designed to detonate midair over Chicago. They attributed the plot to Al Qaeda and the Arabian Peninsula.

What's the current status—because it was a pilot program—of the air cargo advanced screening pilot program, and what are the plans for developing this into something that's industry-wide?

Mr. ALTERMAN. That's a very good question. It is not—the pilot program is not finished. The pilot program is ongoing. It's been ongoing for 6 years. We are currently waiting for a CBP rule that would make mandatory the filing of certain information to CBP. This is a cooperative program between CBP and the TSA. TSA would be then responsible for doing the checking when CBP got information that some of the packages might be suspect.

We need to do that. We need to make that final. We need to make that final as quickly as possible, and we need to make it applicable to everybody. The hang-up as I know it right now is that we're still waiting for a CBP rule to make it mandatory, and I think that one of the problems that they're encountering is we do have this new administration's rule that you can't put in new rules without taking two away and the cost implications of that. My guess is that, bureaucratically, it may be hung up in that issue. I don't know. Mr. White may know a little bit more than I do on that.

But you're absolutely correct. It's an issue that's ongoing. Our members have been participating. There are millions of packages that are screened that way now—not screened, but the information is given—and we need to make that universal.

Senator DUCKWORTH. Thank you.

Mr. White, do you want to address that? Is that rule ready to go but it just can't be posted because of the new Trump administration—

Mr. WHITE. It has been going between CBP, TSA, and DHS. It's our understanding that the rule is very close, according to meetings with CBP last week, and that it's in its final version for proposed rulemaking. They may be able to not even have to have a proposed rule. They're looking to see if they can actually implement it under current rules.

But the same as Mr. Alterman mentioned, we are very supportive of the ACAS program. We think that's something that—technology actually brings information together to enhance screening, and it's proven very well that it can be done. There are still some technology challenges that will be needed, but I think once it's implemented, it'll become the norm.

Senator DUCKWORTH. Thank you. I yield back.

Senator BLUNT [presiding]. Senator Schatz.

**STATEMENT OF HON. BRIAN SCHATZ,
U.S. SENATOR FROM HAWAII**

Senator SCHATZ. Thank you. I have sort of two lines of questioning.

Mr. Alterman, I wanted to talk to you about the segmentation at airports, and I want to ask you questions from a layman's perspective. We have Trusted Traveler, we have TSA Pre, we have now Clear, we have your regular lines, and I guess from a logistics standpoint, my question is at what point are we sort of taking a one-lane highway, widening it to five, and then having it merge back into one a mile later?

I mean, I know that sounds, you know, borderline sassy. But it's a real question, because those of us who travel a lot sort of wonder whether there's not a point at which this just becomes how effectively an individual experienced traveler can sort of work the arbitrage in this system rather than increase throughput capacity. So I wonder how much thought has been given to that question. And can you reassure me that there is a strategic plan here and there is some strategic thinking rather than just new product offerings for individual travelers as we go along?

Mr. ALTERMAN. I'm probably the wrong one to ask that question of. We may have an airport that would have a better idea. But I sort of smiled when you mentioned that, because we have about five different ways of getting through security, and they all seem to converge at one point.

Senator SCHATZ. At the security line, yes.

Mr. ALTERMAN. At the security line. I don't actually know the answer to that question.

Mr. WEILER. Senator, I could speak to that a little bit.

Senator SCHATZ. Sure, please.

Mr. WEILER. I manage a small hub airport, so we have about a million passengers, and I actually had that same question about our checkpoint. We have two standard lanes and one PreCheck lane, and we're just about ready to get a Known Crew Member lane. So it's kind of that same thing. I do think the focus should continue to be on making all the main lines as efficient as possible.

But even on like the Known Crew Member line, my understanding, from talking to our TSA personnel, is it's not like that's going to have to be staffed all day long. When they get a peak

group in—we have a lot of pilots that live in our area that are traveling to other hub airports to do their things, and they'll get 10 of them in, put them in that line behind a long line, and then deploy assets over there to deal with them and move it on.

So I agree. I'm kind of a believer now. We're excited about getting the Known Crew Member, but I also share your concerns. The focus should continue to be on increasing throughput through the main line.

Senator SCHATZ. Thank you.

Mr. Alterman—and feel free to hand it off, as you just did—I want to talk to you about the biometric data collection. I know there are a couple of pilot programs being implemented. Generally speaking, I think this is an exciting space, and even if I had reservations, which I do from the civil liberties standpoint, I think this is inevitable. I think faces will be in databases, but the question becomes sort of how you manage this process, recognizing our Fourth Amendment rights.

So the question is: My understanding is that DHS has a requirement for a privacy impact assessment, and they're doing that on the CBP side. I'm wondering, you know, where we're going to be, first of all, specifically on the privacy impact assessment, and then, second, more generally, if you have private sector companies that do this biometric data analysis and provide these services to airports and hubs, do they keep the data? What's the understanding with respect to where those facial recognition data go?

Mr. ALTERMAN. I'm getting very good at not answering questions. I don't know the answer to that, but Mr. White has mentioned the biometrics in his testimony, and we have a technology expert here. Am I allowed to turn it over to them?

Senator SCHATZ. Sure. This is working fine.

Mr. WHITE. From an airline perspective, as I mentioned earlier, our issue is we have emerging technologies of biometrics and which one is best or not. We see advantages, but where the data is stored is an issue, in general, from a global standard, because we have the European requirements on just the passenger data as to what we have that we submit already to the government.

So I think some of that that we've already learned from the passenger data, your personal information when you make your reservation, that we're providing in the Advanced Passenger Information System is already—some of that information is probably related to the biometric side. So there's probably some preexisting study that's been done from that point.

Senator SCHATZ. Ms. Pressnell, did you want to add anything?

Ms. PRESSNELL. I cannot speak directly to biometrics, sir.

Senator SCHATZ. So it just seems to me that for the Committee and staff and others to consider that it's not at all clear as we move forward—and we are. We're going to move forward with biometric data collection, and we should. But it's not a trivial question to ask—who gets the data? Does a private sector company own this IP? Is there a requirement for the destruction of these data sets? Does this need to be in statute?

I think these are important questions, because we're moving forward apace on all of this, and it's a non-trivial question whether or not a private sector company will now be in possession of not

just personally identifying information in the traditional sense, but also your face.

Thank you.

Senator BLUNT. Another question, Senator Schatz, another point that came up earlier, too, is if we're going to do biometric data, do we need to have different models that use different biometrics, or would we be better off if we sort of directed this into one direction so it's not everybody's fingerprints and everybody's facial or everybody's iris or—what do we—are we letting everybody collect everything, which would be another thought along that path you were pursuing?

So the Chairman of the Full Committee always comes in with really the hard questions very near the end of the hearing when the witnesses are basically worn out and least resistant. So I'll turn it over to the Chairman.

Senator Thune.

**STATEMENT OF HON. JOHN THUNE,
U.S. SENATOR FROM SOUTH DAKOTA**

The CHAIRMAN. Thank you, Senator Blunt, and I know at this point in the hearing, too, that everything has been asked, so I'm sure you've answered these questions. But I do want to thank you, Senator Blunt, for having the hearing today to discuss the TSA Modernization Act that we introduced yesterday along with Senators Nelson and Cantwell.

As with the FAA reauthorization, I'm pleased that we came to agreement on a package of practical reforms to improve aviation security, and building on the successful enactment of a host of security enhancements last year, I think this authorizing legislation would make important improvements to aviation security as well as the passenger travel experience. In developing the legislation, the Committee engaged with TSA officials and with industry stakeholders to ensure that workable solutions with the greatest impact were included. In particular, I appreciate the effort of those represented on this panel, the TSA, and others to help shape the legislation.

We plan to consider the bill at our markup next week, and so I just have a few questions that perhaps build on or maybe are redundant ones that have already been asked. But you talked a little bit about some of these issues, I know already. But this past May, the Aviation Security Advisory Committee—and I'll direct this to Mr. Alterman—which you chair, released a Checkpoint of the Future report required by the FAA Extension Safety and Security Act of 2016. The report made a series of industry and stakeholder recommendations to TSA outlining how the agency can improve the efficiency and effectiveness of passenger screening checkpoints at U.S. airports.

The question is: In the Modernization Act, we would formally authorize the Innovation Task Force to assess the impact of using some of these exciting new technologies such as biometrics. Do you think that these and other provisions in the bill will truly help TSA to develop a Checkpoint of the Future while also increasing security, and what are the key things to look for in implementation of that?

Mr. ALTERMAN. Thank you, Mr. Chairman. I think that we're moving forward well on that issue. I have to do a little bit of a shout-out to our new Security Technology Subcommittee, which is a committee that was actually formed after the recent Act. They did one heck of a job in turning out that report, and they should get the credit for that.

TSA has accepted that report and is moving forward. I think in combination with the Innovation Task Force, either as it is today or as it will be after this legislation, hopefully, I think that the agency is committed to doing those things. But the devil is always in the details, and there are a whole lot of moving parts in working toward a Checkpoint of the Future that both enhances security and enhances passenger acceptance of them and passenger throughput.

Those are tough issues, and I think that what the report did is set down a baseline for TSA to consider, and I hope that that report is used by the Innovation Task Force in developing new recommendations for TSA. It's a fairly new report. I believe it was submitted to the Congress in July, and things don't always move as quickly as a lot of us like. But I think it was a very good start, and I'm hoping that we can look forward to some good results out of that.

I might say that in terms of ASAC and in terms of what we do, there has been sort of a change in the way we operate. It used to be—we understand that we're just an advisory committee. We can't tell TSA to do things. We just give them advice. What we have told them, though, in the past few years is "If you accept our recommendations, we are going to follow through on implementation." We're not just going to let it sit. So we intend to follow through and find out exactly how they're going to react and how they're going to implement those recommendations. I'm not sure just having them accept recommendations is good enough. We need to follow through on the implementation.

The question is a good one, and it's a little early to tell exactly how it's going to come out. But I think it's a good start.

The CHAIRMAN. Well, we would look forward to working with you to ensure that those do get implemented, given the advisory role of your Task Force.

Ms. Pressnell, one of the major themes of the TSA Modernization Act is finding ways to speed up TSA's deployment of the latest security technology at airports. For example, one provision instructs TSA to authorize the third-party testing and evaluation of security screening equipment in an effort to enable faster deployment of the latest and most effective screening technologies.

Can you explain how this and other provisions in this bill will assist TSA in getting the most advanced technology out into the field at a faster rate than it is currently able to?

Ms. PRESSNELL. Mr. Thune, thank you so much for that question. The bottom line is it takes too long. It simply takes too long to get technology from start to finish and deployed in the airports in large part because the process for testing and—setting requirements and then testing gets bogged down. So lots of times, we have a technology that goes through the lab, it gets certified, and then we go on to operational testing, where we end up getting through testing, and then we get bogged down by administrative type reports.

What the third-party testing process would do—and it would be extraordinarily helpful to us—is that it would cut down significantly on the time that it would take to get us through the process. That primarily would be because we could be testing things that are the non-requirements that could get us through a lot faster. We spend a lot of time testing and then re-testing and then, of course, going through the reporting phase that can sometimes take months. But going through a third-party testing process would certainly help us field technology a lot faster simply because we're able to, in some cases, with your bill, maybe do some of the testing in our own facilities and other contracting facilities where this type of thing could occur.

The bottom line for third-party testing to really make it work, though, is to make sure that when it's complete that TSA will readily accept the results. That's a key factor for us because we're taking our technology—it takes a lot of money to go through the process, but if it's not accepted at the end, it's just going to slow down the process even more. So that would be the only limitation that we can see, and we would certainly recommend that TSA accept the results at the end of the testing process.

The CHAIRMAN. OK. Mr. Chairman, my time has expired. Thank you.

Senator BLUNT. Thank you, Chairman.

Senator Blumenthal.

**STATEMENT OF HON. RICHARD BLUMENTHAL,
U.S. SENATOR FROM CONNECTICUT**

Senator BLUMENTHAL. Thanks, Mr. Chairman.

I'd like to ask members of the panel—and I know you're familiar with the shift in financial burden with TSA's budget moved onto, in effect, passengers. Do you agree that the airlines themselves ought to pay for a portion of TSA's costs? Why don't we begin on your right and go down the panel.

Mr. WEILER. Senator, I don't know that I have a position on that one way or another. I do know that the airports are concerned about the cost being passed along to them in the environment that we're currently operating under. Airports are very concerned about keeping cost—we all want to deploy new technology. At the end of the day, for us, it's law enforcement, and we're very pleased with the bill, that it does increase and puts more scrutiny on public areas, which should be, but also it provides funding for that. As far as the airlines, I don't know that I can make a position on that, sir.

Mr. ALTERMAN. I'm not sure I have a position on that, either, Senator. It's a tough issue because when you talk about airlines—and maybe Mr. White can answer this better than I can. I've gotten very good at passing questions to Mr. White since I don't represent the passenger side of the industry. When airlines—my impression is that when airlines have to pay for it, eventually the passenger has to pay for it because there's a pass-through. But I'm not sure that's the case, and, actually, I hate to duck the question, but I really haven't thought about that enough to really give you a definitive answer.

Ms. PRESSNELL. Mr. Blumenthal, I'm sorry to have to—to not be able to answer that, either. Our coalition has not taken a position on that, sir.

Mr. WHITE. So someone that does represent the airlines—if you take a look at the security fee, I guess the issue—this is a national security issue. This isn't just airline security. This is a national security issue, and when it comes to that, it affects governments and it affects the economies. So we do not believe it's necessarily the need for the airline to pay that fee, because we're just a portion of the user. But we also affect your economies and bring that transport that makes your economies work around the world.

So we look at it that way, that we're just part of that system, and where does it come down at the end of the day. We've been talking about this issue ever since 9/11, but from my honest perspective, no, we don't believe we should have that fee.

Senator BLUMENTHAL. Well, as you know, all of you—and, unfortunately, the consumer side of this argument is not represented, and I respect that your organizations have not taken a position. But Congress acquiesced to the airlines' request—maybe I should say demands—to eliminate their responsibility to contribute about \$400 million, which they had been contributing, correct?

Mr. WHITE. Correct.

Senator BLUMENTHAL. And they had been required to do so since, I think, September 11. One of the publications—I'm looking right now at my notes—called this one of the top lobbying victories of 2013. So that victory blew a massive hole in TSA's budget. When we talk about the effectiveness of TSA, we're really talking about what it does with the resources that it has. If the resources are deprived, then its effectiveness is undermined.

Next week, we're going to consider a long-term TSA bill—I think it's next week—and that bill proposes shifting the increase that was enacted in 2013 back to TSA. But I guess the question of the moment is whether—in shifting the security fee that customers pay back to TSA, shouldn't we also require that the airlines at least pay a portion of it, because it would give them some real skin in this game.

I understand the airlines affect the economy. So do the railroads. So does every method of transportation. They all need some security, and I respectfully suggest that maybe you can ask your organizations whether they should take a position, and that they should.

Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

Senator BLUNT. Thank you, Senator Blumenthal.

Chairman Thune, any other questions?

[No verbal response.]

Senator BLUNT. Well, thanks to the panel for being here. I believe it's the Chairman's intention to mark this bill up maybe even as early as next week, and your testimony helped a lot today. Thank you all.

The Committee is adjourned.

[Whereupon, at 11:36 a.m., the hearing was adjourned.]

A P P E N D I X

RESPONSE TO WRITTEN QUESTIONS SUBMITTED BY HON. GARY PETERS TO
BRIAN WEILER

Airport Security Infrastructure Funding

In recent years, airports have been improving and expanding their security infrastructure to deal with an increasing number of enhanced threats on airports and air travelers. However, as threats become more complex and nonsterile areas of airports are more frequently targeted, I believe airports need additional assistance to implement the necessary airport security infrastructure improvements to protect the traveling public.

When this Committee marked up the FAA Reauthorization bill, I introduced two bipartisan amendments, which were included in the bill that would help airports use existing funding sources for security infrastructure projects. And when TSA Administrator Pekoske testified before this Committee at his nomination hearing, I asked him about creating an airport security-focused grant program at TSA and he said he would look into it.

Question 1. Can you talk about your experiences with existing TSA airport security-focused grant programs, and what you would like to see in a TSA grant program to ensure that airports are able to effectively meet their security needs?

Answer. Unfortunately, there are no existing “TSA security focused grant programs” of any significance for airports to apply for at this time. However, airports would welcome new Federal resources from TSA to help meet existing Federal mandates and to further enhance security. If grant funds were made available, we would ask for flexibility to meet the most pressing needs at individual facilities. Specific needs can vary airport to airport depending on local conditions.

While additional flexibility would be welcomed, such as giving airport operators the discretion to utilize AIP funds or PFCs for some security-related items, we urge Congress to avoid targeting those programs for significant security investments. AIP and PFC revenues are already scarce, and further diluting those resources would have a negative impact on many other critical airport infrastructure priorities.

Question 2. Do you support the proposal that would redirect airline passenger security fees, which are right now used to offset unrelated government funding, back to aviation security purposes?

Answer. The airport community fully supports efforts to redirect aviation security fee collections from deficit reduction to aviation security purposes. These revenues could be utilized to support a robust TSA grant program envisioned in question 1 and to meet other security needs across the aviation system, which include LEO reimbursement to airports, the acquisition and deployment of enhanced security technology, and other high-priority imperatives.

RESPONSE TO WRITTEN QUESTIONS SUBMITTED BY HON. GARY PETERS TO
STEPHEN ALTERMAN

Airport Security Infrastructure Funding

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asked him about creating an airport security-focused grant program at TSA and he said he would look into it.

Question 1. Can you talk about your experiences with existing TSA airport security-focused grant programs, and what you would like to see in a TSA grant program to ensure that airports are able to effectively meet their security needs?

Answer. Although I have no direct experience in the area of airport grant programs, it is clear that, in a time of limited resources, such programs would be appropriate to help airports meet their growing security responsibilities. Such grants might be used to help airports reconfigure passenger checkpoints to include new technologies and to implement more robust strategies to address the issue of insider threats. Having said that, since I am not an expert in this area (or in the area of how to pay for such grants), it might be more appropriate to address this question to the airport community.

Question 2. Do you support the proposal that would redirect airline passenger security fees, which are right now used to offset unrelated government funding, back to aviation security purposes?

Answer. I absolutely support a proposal to ensure that airline passenger security fees are redirected to pay for security enhancements and not for unrelated purposes. It is simply unconscionable that these fees are being used for purposes wholly unrelated to their stated purpose.

RESPONSE TO WRITTEN QUESTION SUBMITTED BY HON. TAMMY DUCKWORTH TO
STEPHEN ALTERMAN

Question. You are to be commended for your work as Chairman of the Aviation Security Advisory Committee, or "ASAC." The ASAC provides advice to the TSA Administrator on aviation security matters. Its efforts are well-regarded.

The aircraft maintenance technician community is not represented on the ASAC, although pilots and flight attendants do have representation on the ASAC. Aircraft maintenance is among the primary career fields in the airline industry. Would a craft specific voice on behalf of aircraft maintenance technicians contribute to the ASAC mission?

Answer. Positions on the Aviation Security Advisory Committee (ASAC) are appointed by the TSA Administrator to provide a broad representation of aviation stakeholders. The labor community is currently well represented by various organizations and, without knowing more, it is unclear to me whether having maintenance technician representation would, or would not, be appropriate. That decision is up to the Administrator.

Having said that, much of the work of ASAC is done at the subcommittee level. ASAC subcommittees consist, not only of ASAC members, but also of Subject Matter Experts who lend their experience in areas being discussed. It occurs to me that input from the maintenance technician community would be appropriate when issues within its area of expertise are being discussed by one or more subcommittees.

Finally, with respect to full ASAC membership, it is my understanding that TSA will shortly be soliciting new applications for membership by publishing a notice in the Federal Register. To the extent that any maintenance technician representatives are interested, they should be encouraged to apply.

RESPONSE TO WRITTEN QUESTIONS SUBMITTED BY HON. GARY PETERS TO
SISSY PRESSNELL

Airport Security Infrastructure Funding

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When this Committee marked up the FAA Reauthorization bill, I introduced two bipartisan amendments, which were included in the bill that would help airports use existing funding sources for security infrastructure projects. And when TSA Administrator Pekoske testified before this Committee at his nomination hearing, I asked him about creating an airport security-focused grant program at TSA and he said he would look into it.

Question 1. Can you talk about your experiences with existing TSA airport security-focused grant programs, and what you would like to see in a TSA grant program to ensure that airports are able to effectively meet their security needs?

Answer. Airports must be able to meet the growing demands of air travelers and must be provided with the financial resources to help meet critical mission needs to ensure that the highest level of screening capabilities are in place. The Security Manufacturers Coalition (SMC) supports the recommendations contained in the Aviation Security Advisory Committee (ASAC) report titled “Improving Checkpoints at U.S. Airports” to establish a multi-year program that includes a capital fund for equipment that is similar to the mandatory Aviation Security Capital Fund that provides \$250 million annually for the Electronic Baggage Screening Program (EBSP). Creating a reliable and consistent funding resource is needed to ensure the highest screening capabilities are deployed at U.S. airports.

Question 2. Do you support the proposal that would redirect airline passenger security fees, which are right now used to offset unrelated government funding, back to aviation security purposes?

Answer. The Security Manufacturers Coalition (SMC) recognizes that Congress must deal with substantial funding constraints and demands on its limited resources in an attempt to meet the Aviation and Transportation Security Act (ATSA) to pay for aviation services as well as the acquisition, operation, and maintenance of equipment. However, The Bipartisan Budget Act of 2013 directed the diversion of a portion of the fee through 2023 to pay for non-aviation activities such as debt reduction. Approximately \$1.28 billion of the fee will be diverted in FY 2017. The SMC believes that inconsistent funding levels as well as the diversion of fees make it difficult for TSA to sustain its mission and keep pace with the recapitalization and acquisition of next-generation security technology equipment. The SMC supports the recommendations of the Aviation Security Advisory Committee (ASAC) to end the diversion of a portion of the Passenger Security Fee that is now dedicated for deficit reduction to pay for checkpoint development and deployment of new technology enhancements. Longer term, we support a multi-year approach that includes a checkpoint equipment capital fund, similar to the checked baggage program, to provide consistent availability of resources for technology acquisitions.

RESPONSE TO WRITTEN QUESTIONS SUBMITTED BY HON. GARY PETERS TO
MICHAEL WHITE

Airport Security Infrastructure Funding

In recent years, airports have been improving and expanding their security infrastructure to deal with an increasing number of enhanced threats on airports and air travelers. However, as threats become more complex and nonsterile areas of airports are more frequently targeted, I believe airports need additional assistance to implement the necessary airport security infrastructure improvements to protect the traveling public.

When this Committee marked up the FAA Reauthorization bill, I introduced two bipartisan amendments, which were included in the bill that would help airports use existing funding sources for security infrastructure projects. And when TSA Administrator Pekoske testified before this Committee at his nomination hearing, I asked him about creating an airport security-focused grant program at TSA and he said he would look into it.

Question 1. Can you talk about your experiences with existing TSA airport security-focused grant programs, and what you would like to see in a TSA grant program to ensure that airports are able to effectively meet their security needs?

Answer. We would like to see grant money put into a joint effort between IATA, the TSA, airports, educational institutions, and other strategic partners to develop future screening technologies and processes to improve passenger facilitation while also enhancing aviation security. There also needs to be more focus on cyber security threats, the use of biometrics, IT programming for risk targeting, and the development of new systems.

We also think there is a need to look at many of the current security programs to determine if they are of value and are truly reducing risk. For instance, do certain manpower intensive programs, such as the Federal Air Marshal program, offer as much risk reduction value versus using the same funds for visible canine teams, new terminal designs, or improved screening technology? Further, we support increased participation in trusted travelers programs like TSA Pre✓® to reduce security screening wait times.

Question 2. Do you support the proposal that would redirect airline passenger security fees, which are right now used to offset unrelated government funding, back to aviation security purposes?

Answer. Yes, we strongly supports using passenger security fees for their intended purpose of aviation security as opposed to being diverted and used for unrelated government purposes. As you may be aware, Congress has diverted a total of \$15.79 billion in passenger security fees through Fiscal Year 2025 to the general fund. We also believe the TSA should be held accountable for providing more timely and accurate justifications for what it plans to spend on aviation security programs.



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